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BY

H. R. JAMES, M.A.

SOMETIME PRINCIPAL, PRESIDENCY COLLEGE, CALCUTTA

VOL II
PART IV THE ABIDING SPLENDOUR

WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

THE scope and purpose of this volume was sketched in the Preface to Vol. I. The aim as there explained is the communication not of critical results, but of some part of a very wide content. The method therefore, it may be emphasized again, is necessarily selective, and in the final subdivision of the work selection has been peculiarly difficult. For almost each chapter in Part IV deals with a subject to which a fully equipped specialist devotes a lifetime of study. The method of condensation and summary was here evidently more than ever out of place, and what has been attempted is something quite different. The endeavour is to present some part or aspect of each subject with such fulness as may produce an effect, within its limits, definite and complete. In the chapters on drama the attempt is to make Greek tragedy and comedy intelligible to the modern reader through the presentation of certain plays in the concrete. In dealing with history the standpoint has been the personality of the great historians. Similarly under "oratory" the life-story of Demosthenes, and, to a secondary extent, of Isocrates, has been taken as the most effective means of showing what Greek oratory was, and what power it had. In the yet harder enterprise of bringing to the ordinary reader some realization of the significance of Greek philosophy, it has seemed best to attempt this through the personal side of the teaching of

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle It is, however, in the chapters on art that the difficulty has been most acutely felt Here I have tried to use the means most ready to hand in England, and to create, where it is not already present, a sense of the greatness of Greek temple architecture and architectural sculpture through the Parthenon and the Elgin Marbles For in the Greek Rooms in the British Museum there are opportunities of a first-hand appreciation of Greek sculpture unique in their amplitude I have simply tried to make full use of these opportunities

How much this method leaves out needs no showing One or two out of many omissions I specially regret. I have not been able to include any estimate of the achievement of the ancient Greeks in Mathematics and Astronomy and Medicine, though each is a fascinating subject and quite recently has received brilliant illumination through the work of Sir Thomas Heath and Sir Clifford Allbutt I have had reluctantly to leave out any sketch of the development of early Greek thought from Thales to Heraclitus, Empedocles and the Atomists On the side of art it has not been found possible to supplement sculpture with vases, terra-cottas and painting

Another self-denying ordinance has been necessary in respect of illustrations Architecture and sculpture invite liberal illustration by photographs But to illustrate sculpture, at all events fully and effectively, was too costly to be practicable It has therefore seemed better to leave sculpture almost without illustration in the text, and, while referring the reader to books where good illustrations may be found, to insist that the best and most adequate illustration is to be sought among the marbles and casts of the British Museum.

In the final revision of this volume I have had the help and stimulus of *The Legacy of Greece*, published over two years ago, almost simultaneously with my first volume. That is, of course, a book in which the most accomplished Hellenist finds profit and pleasure, and in my very different task I run no risk of appearing to court rash rivalry. All I have had to do has been to make grateful use of this work of ripest English scholarship. My indebtedness to other books is more conveniently acknowledged—so far as what is in its nature infinite can be acknowledged—in the *Notes on Books* appended to each Part of the present volume. But I take this opportunity of thanking Mr J. T. Sheppard for his personal kindness in telling me things I wanted to know about the performance of the *Orestiea* at Cambridge in 1921, and for much other helpful suggestion bearing on my chapters on the Greek drama. To my brother and to Mr Penoyre my obligations have been what they were for my first volume. Mr G. A. Macmillan has not only been as before a sure source of wise counsel in difficulties, but was good enough to spare time for a critical reading of Chapter XVIII both in manuscript and in proof.

H. R. JAMES.

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PART IV.

THE ABIDING SPLENDOUR

“We have not done with the Hellenes yet we have not
entered into full possession of the inheritance bequeathed to us ”
EVELYN ABBOTT, *Preface to Hellenica*.

“Each successive generation must learn from ancient Greece
that which can be taught by her alone, and to assist, however
little, in the transmission of her message is the best reward of a
student ”

R. C. JEBB, *Growth and Influence of
Classical Greek Poetry*, p. 285

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT TEACHERS

1 SOCRATES

“ Great is the stake, yea great beyond men’s deeming, whether we be good or bad ”

PLATO, *Republic*, 608 B

“ But if ye suffer for righteousness’ sake, happy are ye ”

In 399 B C all Athens—the Athens that had heard the news of Aegospotami and endured long agonies of siege and revolution—was stirred by the trial and condemnation to death of an old man named Socrates “ Served the old rascal right ” (or the equivalent of this in classical Attic), said the man in the street, “ the fellow was an enemy of the people and a public nuisance ” But a circle of friends, mostly young men of good family, who of their own accord had sought Socrates’ company and listened with delight to the words that fell from his lips, were stricken with sorrow And this is how one of them describes the death-scene, when the time came for Socrates to die in accordance with the sentence of the Athenian people¹ The passage is from one of Plato’s dialogues.²

¹ There was for certain special reasons an interval of thirty days before the sentence could be carried out During that time Socrates was kept a prisoner, but his friends had free access to the place where he was confined, and he spent the time in conversing with them The subject of the last day’s discussions had been the immortality of the soul

The form of capital punishment usual at Athens was the drinking of a cup of hemlock, a drug which acted swiftly and painlessly, as described in the text

² *Phaedo*, 116 B to end.

Phaedo of Elis, after whom the dialogue is called, relates for the benefit of Echecrates of Phlius, the story of Socrates' last hours and death

The Death of Socrates.—“It was by this time close on sunset, for Socrates had been away quite a long while. He now came back to us from the bath and sat down, and there was not much conversation after this before the officer of the Eleven came and stood by him, and said ‘Socrates, I shall not have to reproach you, as I do other prisoners, for being angry and railing at me, when I tell them to drink the hemlock, as I am bound to do by my orders. Nay I have found you during the whole time you have been here noble, gentle, and good, above all who ever before came hither, and now also I know full well you are not angry with me—you see it is not my fault—but with those who are really to blame. You know my errand, I am sure. Ah! fare you well, and try to bear easily what needs must be.’ And tears filled his eyes as he turned to go. Then Socrates looked up and said to him ‘May you, too, fare well, I will do as you say,’ and added to us ‘What a good fellow it is! He has been visiting me the whole time, we have had many a talk, and he has been the best of men to me. And now what a generous spirit he shows in shedding tears for me. Come then, Crito, let us do as he bids go some one and fetch the draught, if it is ready pounded, if not, ask the man to pound it.’

“Then said Crito: ‘Oh no, Socrates, I am sure the sun is still upon the mountains, it has not yet set. I know that others have taken the draught quite late, long after word was brought to them—they have dined and drunk deep, and have held converse, some of them, with those whose company they desired. Pray do not be in a hurry, there is time enough yet.’

“Socrates thereupon said ‘Those you speak of, Crito, doubtless had their reasons for so doing—they expected some gain from acting as you say, and I, with good reason also, will *not* do as they. I do not think I should gain anything by postponing the draught for a little, only

incur my own derision for clinging to life and being sparing of what is already gone and done with But do you do exactly as I bade'

"On this Crito made a sign to the servant who was standing near , and he went out, and after some time came back with the man whose business it was to administer the poison , and he brought it ready pounded in a cup On seeing the man, Socrates said to him 'That is well And now my excellent friend—you understand these matters , tell me what to do ' 'Just drink it,' said he, 'and walk about until your legs feel heavy Then lie down , if you do this, it will act of itself ' At the same time he held out the cup to Socrates

"And he took it in all graciousness, Echecrates, without a tremor, without loss of colour or change of countenance, but glancing upward at the man with that keen look of his, said 'Now tell me—about a libation from this cup —may I make one, or not ? ' 'We mix just so much, Socrates, as we think sufficient.' 'I understand,' said he , ' but at all events a man may, and must, pray the gods that his journey from this to the other world may be fortunate This then is my prayer , and may it so come to pass ' As he spoke these words he put the cup to his lips and very quietly and calmly drank off the potion And most of us till then were fairly able to restrain our tears , but when we saw him drinking, and the cup drained, we could refrain no longer , and, for my part, in spite of myself, my tears were rising fast, so that I covered my face and gave way to my grief—not that I mourned for Socrates, but for my own misfortune in losing the companionship of such a friend Crito, too, even before I broke down, when he could not restrain his tears, had got up and gone out As for Apollodorus, who had been weeping all the time and never stopped, he now burst into a storm of sobs and by his lamentations and distress upset the self-control of every one present except Socrates

" 'What strange behaviour is this, my friend,' said the master ' Why it was in great part for this reason that

I sent the women away, that they might not offend in this manner. For I have heard it said that in a man's death-hour there should be a holy stillness. So bear up and keep quiet.'

"On hearing these words we were ashamed and checked our weeping. Socrates walked about for a while, and when, as he told us, his legs felt heavy, he lay down on his back: for such were the officer's instructions. And this man who had given him the draught now took him in hand, and a little later tested his feet and legs; then pressed his foot hard and asked him if he felt the pressure, and he replied 'No.' After this he next pressed the calf of the leg, and proceeding upward in this way showed that his limbs were growing cold and stiffening. Then once more he applied the test and told us that when the cold reached his heart he would be gone. And now when the chill had spread almost to the waist, Socrates uncovered his face (for he had meantime drawn his garment over his head) and said—and these were his last words 'Crito, we owe a cock to Asclepius, do not fail to pay the debt.'

"'It shall be done,' said Crito, 'is there anything else?' To this question, however, there was no reply: and a little later a tremor passed over his body, the attendant uncovered his face and we saw that his eyes were fixed: and thereupon Crito closed his mouth and his eyes.

'Such, Echecrates, was the end of our friend—a man who was, in our esteem, the best of all whom we had ever known, yea, and the wisest and the most righteous.'

Why was Socrates condemned?—How, we may ask, had it come about that a man whose last hours are thus described, was condemned to death as a criminal by an Athenian dicastery-court? We have, it happens, abundant material for judgment. For among the young Athenians who loved Socrates and regarded him as a great teacher were two of the supreme masters of Attic prose, Xenophon and Plato, and through their writings Socrates has become one of the best-known characters of all time.

Socrates' Times.—Socrates was seventy years old at his death, so his life had extended over most of the period during which the power of Athens had risen to its height and declined. He had been born in 469 just ten years after the great deliverance of Plataea and Mycalê. He was an infant when (in 468) Cimon won the battle of the Eurymedon. He was ten years old when the Long Walls were being built, he was passing from boyhood into manhood through the years in which Athens' short-lived land-empire was won and lost (457-447). He was just over thirty when the Parthenon was finished and the Propylaea begun (438). He had seen that stately approach to the Acropolis rise in magnificent proportions year by year, and hastily finished off without being completed, when the peril of war grew imminent. He was thirty-eight years of age when the Peloponnesian war broke out. In his forty-fifth year he had seen the Spartan prisoners from Sphacteria brought in chains to Athens, next year he fought in person at the battle of Delium (424). Then nine years later, when already well over fifty, he had witnessed the sailing of the great armada for Sicily (415), had lived through the alternate hopes and fears of the next two years, had watched, calm himself but not indifferent, the popular elation over the earlier successes, and the stupefaction that followed, when the incredible news of total disaster came. He had had his part in the anxious years which followed, had seen the slow breaking up of Athens' sea-empire, the gleams of reviving hope brought by Cyzicus and Arginusae, the sudden closing in of despair after Aegospotami. He had lived, too, through the agony which ensued, had gone hungry in the siege of Athens, and seen the strong walls, the building of which in his boyhood he could remember, broken down stone by stone to the insolent flutings of his country's enemies. He had lived, now an old man, through the terror of the Thirty and witnessed the restoration of democracy by Thrasybulus. No man who in the years from 460 to 400 B.C. had lived in the full tide of Athenian life can be said to have had an uneventful life. And

Socrates did live in the full tide of that life, and, though taking no part in its public activities (except that he served as a hoplite at the siege of Potidaea and fought in the battle of Delium), he was observing all that happened with an acutely critical intelligence. In social position he was just a citizen of free birth, not an Eupatrid like Solon or Pericles. By profession he was a stone-mason or sculptor (the Greek word used means literally a worker in stone), like his father before him. Five hundred years after his death the traveller Pausanias¹ saw on the Acropolis a Hermes and a group of draped statuary representing the three Graces, which were said to be Socrates' work. But it was not for long that Socrates followed his father's calling. In early manhood he had passed through a mental crisis in which he had come to a resolve to cease practising the craft by which he earned his living, in order that he might have leisure to give himself wholly to what he took to be a divinely appointed mission. This was, strangely enough, neither more nor less than to talk, to talk with every one he met, who was willing to enter into conversation. To talk, but not to talk at random. Socrates always talked with a purpose, a purpose which those he talked with were apt to find exceedingly disconcerting. This purpose was to discover if they had any true understanding of the things they supposed themselves to know, whether this was education or government, poetry or politics, military science or the art of public speaking, or just some ordinary handicraft like pottery and carpentering. The reason doubtless was that he felt within himself an irrepressible desire to penetrate to a true understanding of all matters of deep human concern,—matters such as conduct, public and private, the meaning of justice, beauty, knowledge, and he was deeply impressed with most men's ignorance and apathy regarding these things of great moment, an ignorance which went along with an egregious conceit of knowledge and a stupid self-complacency. Men talked glibly of just and unjust, beautiful and ugly, of courage

¹ Pausanias 1. 22. 8 and ix. 35. 7, Frazer, vol 1, pp 32 and 488

and wisdom and holiness, without any true discernment of what they meant by the words they were using. So he conceived it to be his mission to apply to every one who would converse with him the test of a rigorous cross-examination, the result of which invariably was that his interlocutor became involved in contradiction and was shown up as hopelessly ignorant of the very subject he professed to know most about. For Socrates had a quite terrible subtlety and power as a conversationalist. No one was ever known to get the better of him in argument, most men, even foreign visitors to Athens, famed in other lands for their eloquence and efficiency as teachers, were as wax when once fairly entangled in conversation with Socrates. These discussions were generally held in public and the onlookers found it vastly amusing, especially when some showy and pretentious citizen was made to look ridiculous. For the victim, the man caught in the toils of Socrates' close questioning, it was another matter, such a one was apt to be vexed when put out of countenance. A piquancy was added to Socrates' invincible skill in this kind of discussion by his protestation of his own ignorance and desire to learn, it came to be called Socrates' *irony*.¹

Socrates' way of life and personal appearance.—This was an odd way of living and soon made Socrates a marked man in Athens. "Socrates," says Xenophon, "ever lived in the public eye, at early morning he was to be seen betaking himself to one of the promenades, or wrestling-grounds, at noon he would appear with the gathering crowds in the market-place, and as day declined, wherever the largest throng might be encountered, there was he to be found, talking for the most part, while anyone who chose might stop and listen."² There were other peculiarities about Socrates. As he earned no money, his means were very scanty. He seems to have possessed property

¹ Socrates' own account of these matters, and of the part therein attributed to the Delphic Oracle, will be found in the *Apology*, 20 c to 24 A

² Xenophon, *Recollections of Socrates*, 1 1 10, Dakyns, vol iii Part I pp 3 and 4

enough to afford to his family and himself the bare necessities of life. But this was only possible by a stern economy bordering on indigence. He usually went about barefoot, and wore only a shabby old cloak (without any under-garment), which became a standing joke among those who knew him. All luxuries he dispensed with, yet professed himself well off and content because (like the 'new poor' in England) he had learnt to limit his wants. One way and another he was an oddity, and not the least odd circumstance about him was his personal appearance. He had a bulging forehead, prominent eyes, a snub nose, and thick lips—a combination of features which justified his friends in likening him to old Silenus or a Satyr. Small wonder that he was a marked man and one of the best-known figures in Athens. No wonder there were many who laughed at Socrates, and some who scowled. Such characteristics, while they may intensify the devotion of friends, feed the dislike of enemies.

The Clouds of Aristophanes. Misconceptions of Socrates' character and teaching current in his own life-time at Athens have been perpetuated in an amusing form by the genius of Aristophanes in his comedy *The Clouds*. In *The Clouds* Socrates is brought upon the stage as founder and director of a Thinking School or Contemplatorium—a Phrontisterion in the Greek—where along with his disciples he indulges in all sorts of ridiculous speculations, and openly professes, for a fee, to equip those who come to him with such acuteness of wits as would enable them to get the better of an antagonist in any argument, independently of the merits of the case. In the play, Strepsiades, an Athenian father who has been brought to the verge of bankruptcy by his son Pheidippides' passion for horses, resorts in desperation to the 'Phrontisterion,' and begs Socrates to impart to him the marvellous secret by which the worse cause can be made to appear the better, so that he need not pay his debts.¹ Socrates con-

¹ "Teach me, I beg, that argument of yours,
The one that pays no debts. By Heaven, I swear,
I'll plank down any fee you like to ask."

Aristophanes, *Clouds*, ll. 244-6. See also ll. 112-118.

sents, and when Strepsiades is found too old and stupid to learn, Pheidippides takes his place, with the disastrous result that the first use he makes of his new powers is to give his father a thrashing, and then prove him wrong when he objects. The whole comedy turns on this professed power to make the worse cause appear the better. The worse and the better cause personified as the Just and Unjust Argument are actually brought upon the stage to wrestle in debate for the soul of Pheidippides, and the Unjust Argument is made to win.¹ Finally Strepsiades, in a fury at the evil way in which his resort to Socrates is turning out, climbs on to the roof of the Phrontisterion with a lighted torch and burns it down.

The Clouds was brought out in 423, when Socrates was in his forty-seventh year,² it belongs to a much earlier period of his life, therefore, than that of his trial and condemnation. Yet it is curious that the play anticipates in set terms the indictment on which in 399 Socrates was condemned and put to death. In that indictment there were two counts. (1) Socrates is guilty of rejecting the gods in whom the State believes and of introducing strange gods in their place, (2) he is guilty also of corrupting the minds of the young. These counts are both clearly anticipated in the play.

“ Oh what a fool I’ve been ! What utter madness
To disenthrone the gods for Socrates ! ”³

cries Strepsiades in repentance at the end of the play. At the first encounter with Strepsiades Socrates is made to declare that the gods are abolished, and that the Clouds, Ether and King Whirlwind reign in their stead. “ Zeus did you say ? ” cries Socrates. “ Don’t talk such nonsense ! Why there is no Zeus ! ”⁴ And Strepsiades indoctrinates in turn his son Pheidippides :

“ Whirlwind is king now ; Zeus has been deposed ”⁵

¹ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, ll 889-1104

² The text we have is not, however, that of the play as originally performed, but of a revision made subsequently by the poet

³ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, ll 1476-7.

⁴ Line 367

⁵ Line 828

Chaos Air, Respiration, are the deities that Socrates swears by in the play, not Zeus and Apollo¹ The play takes its name, *The Clouds*, from a band of these new divinities, who come sweeping up over Parnes at Socrates' prayer and act as Chorus

“ Ever we float and we fleet !
 Clouds compact all of shimmering dewdrops, lo we are
 rising
 Forth from our father, Ocean deep-murmuring,
 Upward, up, to the lofty mountain summits
 Clad thick with forest trees !
 There will we scan all the far-seen pinnacles ,
 Watch Earth, the holy, whose fruitage we water,
 And the sacred rivers singing as they flow,
 And the seas chanting in deep-toned accordance
 Come, for the eye of Heaven is flashing his full splendour
 In beams of glittering light.
 Come, let us shake off the mist of tiny rain-drops
 Veiling our immortal forms , let us view the earth
 With gaze far flung the landscape over ”²

Such is the song we hear as they approach

The whole action regarding Pheidippides, and in particular the contest between the Worse and Better Reason illustrates the second charge that of misguiding and perverting the young. The contest, in effect, is a debate between the good old-fashioned type of education which bred up the victors of Marathon, and the new-fangled ideas introduced by the subtle-minded teachers of the day. The final act of the drama is the burning down of the house of Socrates. As he breathes out imprecations and threats against the false teacher, Strepsiades even suggests the alternative of attacking him by course of law “ And pray be my adviser,” he whispers to the image of Hermes standing in the street, “ shall I bring a suit at law against them . ? ”³

The concluding words of the dialogue, as Socrates' Thinking School is burning, are :

“ Have at them, smite and strike, for many reasons,
 But chiefly for their sin against the gods ”⁴

¹ Aristophanes, *Clouds*, line 627

² Lines 1481-2

² Lines 275-290 .

⁴ Lines 1508-9

It may reasonably be concluded that while it is improbable that there can be any direct connection between Aristophanes' burlesque production in 423 B.C. and the trial and condemnation of Socrates twenty-four years afterwards the prosecution and death of Socrates grew out of the same popular misconception of his life and teaching as Aristophanes' comedy, that is (1) the belief that Socrates, like certain Ionian thinkers, engaged in physical speculations which explained away the gods, as did Heraclitus and Anaxagoras for instance, (2) the confusion of Socrates with the professional teachers known as 'Sophists'.

Socrates and Physical Science.—Strange as it may seem, each of these beliefs was exactly contrary to the facts. We have the witness of both Plato and Xenophon that Socrates took little interest in the physical speculations which in his day occupied some of the chief Ionian thinkers. His interest was wholly centred in practical life, in human conduct. "And to speak generally," writes Xenophon, "in regard of things celestial he set his face against attempts to excogitate the machinery by which the divine power performs its several operations. Not only were these matters beyond man's faculties to discover, as he believed, but the attempt to search out what the gods had not chosen to reveal could hardly (he supposed) be well pleasing in their sight"¹ "Up to the limit set by utility, he was ready to join in any investigation, and to follow out an argument with those who were with him, but there he stopped"² From this last quotation it would appear, therefore, that Socrates was even something of a 'Philistine' in respect of *pure* science, and would not have accepted Bacon's *dictum* regarding 'light-giving' experiments³.

Socrates and the Sophists.—That the Greeks came to attach a reprehensible meaning to the name 'sophist' is

¹ *Recollections of Socrates*, iv 7 6, Dakyns, vol. m Part I p 177

² IV -7 8, Dakyns, p 178

³ Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Aphorism 70

illustrated by the modern use of the word 'sophistical'. But it had not been so always. In its origin 'sophist' simply meant a 'seeker after wisdom,' a meaning closely akin to 'philosopher,' which signifies a 'lover of wisdom'. But in Socrates' time and somewhat earlier there had appeared in Hellas a class of professed teachers calling themselves 'sophists,' about whose teaching and influence there has been much disagreement. These professional sophists went about from city to city offering to impart their skill for a fixed fee. Gorgias, Protagoras, Prodicus, Thrasymachus, were famous sophists.¹ Socrates was unlike the sophists in two important respects. (1) he never took payment for any service he might do to those with whom he conversed, (2) he never professed to teach, on the contrary he always made profession of his own ignorance and sought to learn from others, and this peculiarity of his was the Socratic 'irony'. At the same time it must be acknowledged that popular instinct was so far right that there was a certain broad resemblance between the influence of Socrates at Athens and that of the professed sophists in other cities, only with a difference that wholly changed the moral character of that influence. For all Socrates' powers were concentrated on fighting the battle of the Just against the Unjust Argument, and all his influence, both by precept and example, and especially by his method of discussing, or 'dialectic'—was directed to making those with whom he talked, and most of all the young, more thoughtful, more temperate, more self-controlled and better disciplined. The whole bent of his teaching was towards the regulation of life in accordance with principles.

¹ As there was no organized system of advanced teaching in fifth century Greece, the instruction proffered by the sophists to the men of their generation has been aptly designated 'higher education'. See this point very lucidly developed in *The Pageant of Greece* (R. W. Livingstone), pp. 252 and 255. It is hardly fair, perhaps, to call their teaching immoral, but they certainly challenged established beliefs and standards of conduct, and their teaching was so far subversive. So also was Socrates'. Both were symptomatic of a stirring of thought in the fifth century B.C., another aspect of which is seen in Euripides' dramas.

Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that a confusion of Socrates with the professional sophists did him harm in the minds of many of the dicasts who sat in the court which tried him in 399 B.C., as well as with Aristophanes and the Athenian public in 423. Aristophanes, indeed, may possibly have been well aware that his representation of Socrates was gross caricature. Aristophanes and Socrates appear from the witness of Plato's *Banquet*¹ to have been good friends in spite of the buffooneries of the *Clouds*, but Socrates' face and figure were too apt for the comic poet's dramatic purpose, and he could not resist the temptation to use them, when he set out to denounce the new teaching in Athens, which he regarded as destructive of good morals. The injury to Socrates, however, remained, and a long time after bore evil fruit.

Xenophon's 'Recollections.'—We have not one, but two full accounts of Socrates from disciples who had loved his society and who reverenced his memory. The two accounts are different, but not inconsistent with one another. Each pupil saw a different side of the beloved master, and that is the side which his testimony brings out. Xenophon's portraiture has not the delicate subtlety of Plato's, nor the same exquisite charm, it is simple and straightforward, some call it common-place. But, there is virtue in its simplicity and directness. Xenophon illustrates aptly and amply Socrates' personal piety and uprightness, the soundness of his advice to his friends, the wise benevolence of his life and conversation. His own personal impressions of Socrates' character he sums up as follows

"To me, personally, he was what I have myself endeavoured to describe so pious and devoutly religious that he would take no step apart from the will of heaven; so just and upright that he never did even a trifling injury to any living soul, so self-controlled, so temperate, that he never at any time chose the sweeter in place of the better, so sensible, and wise, and prudent that in distinguishing the better from the worse he never erred,

¹ Especially *Banquet*, 223 c

nor had he need of any helper, but for the knowledge of these matters, his judgment was at once infallible and self-sufficing. Capable of reasonably setting forth and defining moral questions, he was also able to test others, and where they erred, to cross-examine and convict them, and so impel and guide them in the path of virtue and noble manhood. With those characteristics, he seemed to be the very impersonation of human perfection and happiness.”¹

Of Socrates’ favourite manner of procedure in conversation he says “His own,—that is the Socratic—method of conducting a rational discussion was to proceed step by step from one point of general agreement to another. Herein lay the real security for reasoning, he would say, and for this reason he was more successful in winning the common consent of his hearers than any one I ever knew.”² Xenophon adds “at the same time

he was no less eager to cultivate a spirit of independence in others.” Such, according to Xenophon, was his life, and his death was in keeping with it “he bore the sentence of condemnation with infinite gentleness and manliness.” “No one within the memory of man ever bowed his head to death more nobly.”³ And of his memory. “But amongst those who knew Socrates and recognised what manner of man he was, all who make virtue and perfection their pursuit still to this day cease not to lament his loss with bitterest regret, as for one who helped them in the pursuit of truth as none else could.”⁴

Socrates in Plato’s Dialogues.—Xenophon’s portraiture of Socrates has been undeservedly slighted, because Plato’s is better. There is a fineness of touch in the delineation of Socrates in the dialogues of Plato which is beyond Xenophon’s skill. The Socrates of the Platonic dialogues is one of the most perfect artistic creations of all time. It is a work of genius. Plato’s *Socrates* lives

¹ *Recollections*, iv 8 11, Dakyns, p 182

² iv 6 15, Dakyns, p 175

³ iv 8 1 and 2, Dakyns, p 179

⁴ iv 8 11, Dakyns, pp 181 and 182

like the most vivid characters in plays and novels—like Hamlet or Shylock, Sam Weller or Colonel Newcome. How nearly the Socrates of the dialogues exactly corresponds to the Socrates of real life, how much Plato puts into it through the intuitions of his own genius is beyond any critic's sagacity to say. Without doubt it is an idealized Socrates, but the idealized likeness sometimes gets closer to the real object than the duller but more accurate likeness—just as the painting of a great artist is truer than a photograph. It is Plato's dialogues at all events which have supplied that image of Socrates which has dominated the imaginations of men for two thousand years, and will so long as the dialogues are read.

Socrates' contribution to the history of thought.—It is the dialogues which give Socrates his chief importance in the history of philosophy. Socrates himself left no writings. It is possible, however, through careful comparison of what others have written about him to estimate his contributions to the history of thought in the narrow sense. Aristotle definitely says¹ that the actual services of Socrates to philosophy were (1) the making of definitions, (2) the use of induction, and he seems to be right in ascribing to Socrates' procedure and influence these two significant advances. In the dialogues of Plato we find Socrates continually endeavouring to arrive at the common element in things beautiful, or just, or good, or honourable again and again in discussion he presses for a definition of knowledge, of courage, of holiness, of prudence. He saw how loosely men are apt to make use of these terms without any consistency or clear conception of what they mean.² It was necessary to render the use

¹ *Metaphysics*, xii 9 3

² It is not very different in our own time. Take politics. How the words *self-determination*, *nationality*, *liberalism*, *equality*, *reform*, *retrograde*, are bandied about, and how little clear meaning do most readers, and a good many writers, attach to them! How many of us are prepared to define the terms we use, and give guarantees for their consistent use? Take literature and the arts. The use by critics of terms such as *purity of style*, *distinction*, *realism*, *symbolism*, *impressionist*, is frequently vague, loose, and arbitrary. We think we know, but often we do not know.

of such conceptions more exact before there could be any clear and accurate reasoning at all. Socrates' insistence on definition was therefore a most valuable preliminary to the working out of a system of thought. Systematic thinking, moreover, requires general principles. Socrates was constantly endeavouring to advance from the particular to the general, from just acts or beautiful objects to conceptions of justice and beauty, and this advance from the particular to the general is *induction*.

The real Socrates.—As we have noted already, Socrates was not a writer. So far as we know, he left no scrap of writing.¹ Neither was he a leader in the active public life of his day.² He had no career in the ordinary sense—he was neither soldier, statesman, nor man of letters. And yet he was one of the world's greatest men, one of the few who have impressed their influence deeply on humanity. His greatness is shown not by any outward achievements, but through his influence on other men.

Even in the world of school we use words and phrases like *good form*, *patriotism*, *sporting spirit*, without stopping to think what exactly we mean by them. It seems so simple and obvious, but is not. A modern Socrates would find as much scope in cross-examining modern politicians, schoolmasters, journalists, Trades Union leaders, and schoolboys, and could get as much fun out of it, as ever did Socrates, the son of Sophroniscus, in fifth-century Athens. It is not suggested that terms like the above have no definite and useful meaning, but that it takes trouble—the sort of trouble Socrates took—to guard against error in using them.

¹ There is one trifling qualification to be made. In the opening of the *Phaedo* Socrates is described as employing himself while in prison with the composition of a Hymn to Apollo, and in turning some of Aesop's Fables into verse. For this and the reasons given by Socrates in explanation, see *Phaedo*, 60 and 61.

² Once, and once only, Socrates held public office in Athens. He was one of the Council of Five Hundred in the year 406 B.C., and it happened that at the time of the impeachment of the admirals (above p. 252) his tribe was in office. Both Xenophon and Plato relate that Socrates, alone of the Prytaneis, or acting councillors, refused to bow to the will of the populace in putting forward the illegal proposal to try the admirals together, and so brought himself into imminent danger of sharing their fate. For this, and other examples of Socrates' moral courage and steady refusal to do wrong for any fear of man, see *Recollections of Socrates*, iv 4 1-3, Dakyns, pp. 153-4, and Plato, *Apology*, 32 B-D.

His great gift was character. He affected those with whom he came in contact by some wonderful charm of personality, combined with an astonishing acuteness of intellect, and a genius for conversation,—the sort of talk which the Athenians of his day called “dialectic.” We have a measure of his greatness in the number of the schools of thought which owed their origin to his stimulus—Cynic and Cyrenaic, Stoic and Epicurean, and above all Plato’s *Academy*. Their variety attests his manysidedness.

We thus know Socrates through the influence of his mind and discourse on other men, since he left nothing else of his own. The real Socrates is made known to us in the effects of his force of character on men so unlike as Antisthenes, Aristippus, and Alcibiades, on Xenophon and Plato. And surely we get nearest to the real Socrates through the man who felt the inspiration of his character most deeply and reacted upon it most powerfully—Plato. The figure of Socrates, as worked out indirectly and subtly, but most completely, in the thirty or so dialogues of Plato, is so full and definite and self-consistent as almost to compel acceptance of its reality. It is not inconsistent with the more direct and matter-of-fact portrait drawing of Xenophon, which makes of Socrates an incarnation of glorified good sense,—only finer, subtler, more individual, more complete, and therefore, truer. And what are the leading traits in this character? In Socrates, as limned by Plato in the dialogues, we discern, firstly, a charming inoffensiveness and urbanity, qualities which move one student of Plato to call Socrates the most perfect gentleman found in literature, excepting only the Christ of the Gospels. Along with this urbanity goes a delicate and penetrating humour. There is his untiring persistence in the search for the true understanding of the things that interest him, and his intolerance of shams. Above all there is his passion for righteousness, his invincible belief in goodness, his firm conviction that the soul’s integrity in thought and action is the one thing that matters.

Conclusion of the 'Gorgias.'—This highest aspect of Socrates' character and teaching is, perhaps, presented with more fulness and force in the concluding paragraphs of the *Gorgias* than anywhere else in Plato. There, after relating a beautiful myth of the judgment of the dead, Socrates is made to say

" I for my part, Callicles, am fully convinced by these stories and I study how I shall present my soul for judgment whole and clean to the utmost possible. I put aside the honours that most men value and, with a single eye to truth, I try steadfastly as I may both to live in the practice of all virtue and, when my time comes, therein to die. And I call other men to this life to the extent of my power, and you, in particular, I answer with a call thereto, and to that contest which I declare to be a contest of more importance than all our contests in the city, and I make it a reproach to you that you will not be able to help yourself when the trial and the judgment of which I speak are appointed for you, when you are haled to court and stand before the judge, the son of Aegina,¹ you will gasp and turn giddy, as you say I might before a court in Athens here."

" It may be that all this seems to you an old wife's tale, and you reject it with scorn, and in fact it would be reasonable enough to scorn it, if by diligent seeking we could find a better and truer tale to put in its place. But now, see how you, and Polus, and Gorgias, three of the wisest of the Hellenes, are unable to prove that we ought to live any other life than this which appears to be to our interest in that unseen world also. In all our long argument, while every other contention has been refuted, this alone stands firm, that we should be more careful not to do wrong than not to suffer wrong, that every man should above all else practise not to seem to be good but to be good, both in public life and in private, that if on occasion a man fall into vice, he should suffer chastisement, and that the next best thing to being just is this to become just and pay the penalty of injustice by being

¹ Rhadamanthus, one of the judges of the dead.

chastised, that one should avoid every form of flattering deceit whether it regard oneself or others, the few or the many, that one should employ the art of rhetoric, and every other form of action, for just ends always”

“ So heed my words, and follow the path which, as our discussion signifies, leads to happiness, both while you live, and after life is ended Suffer who will to scorn you for a fool and to heap upon you insults, if he wishes—nay have courage even to endure the dishonouring blow ‘twill be nothing worthy of account, if by the practice of virtue you are in very truth “a man of honour and a gentleman” And later on, when together we put these principles into practice, it will be time, if it seems right, to set our hands to public affairs, or to follow any other plan that may seem good, with the assurance that we are then better able to take counsel than we are now. It is surely disgraceful, being as we now are, to carry things with a high hand as though we were of some account, though we are never twice of the same mind even concerning matters of the highest moment to such a length does our lack of proper education go So then let us take our present conclusions for guides, they tell us that this fashion of life is best, and bid us live and die in the practice of justice and every virtue ”¹

¹ *Gorgias*, 526 D to end

CHAPTER XI

THE GREAT TEACHERS

2 PLATO

“ If this had been what was said by all of you from the first, and such your admonitions to us from our youth up, we should not have been on the watch to prevent each other from doing wrong, but each one would have kept strict watch over himself, afraid lest by wrong doing he should live in fellowship with the greatest evil ”

PLATO, *Republic*, 367 A

SOCRATES is known solely through the impression which his words and character made on the minds of other men. Plato, the second supremely great name in Greek philosophy, is known almost wholly from his writings, the writings which have made his master, Socrates, the most familiar figure of all antiquity. But while Plato's dialogues reveal Socrates, they keep himself concealed.

Plato's Life.—Born of one of the most aristocratic families in Athens, an Eupatrid, connected on both sides with the house of Codrus, Plato approached philosophy as one of the gilded youths who cultivated Socrates' society to sharpen their wits, but to very different purpose from most of them. He not only listened to Socrates, but was attached to him by an intense personal devotion. The death of Socrates, which happened when he was between twenty-five and thirty years of age, was the decisive turning point in his life. Tradition says that immediately after the carrying out of the sentence in the manner described in the *Phaedo*, Plato left Athens. All his views

of public life and of his own career were changed. He turned from the honourable ambition which earlier had occupied his mind, and bent his whole power of thought to working out various aspects of the questions he had heard discussed in the society of Socrates. This purpose he carried out not in systematic treatises, but in a succession of studies in dialogue form. Mostly the dialogues purport to be conversations between Socrates and some personage, or personages, well known in the Athenian society of Plato's day. Plato's own name occurs three times only in the whole series¹ and then only by way of casual allusion. But his two brothers, Glaucon and Adeimantus, are chief interlocutors in the *Republic*, most famous of all the dialogues. To read the dialogues of Plato is an education in philosophy and the humanities. For they cover a wide field of speculative reasoning, and they are written in the most charming Greek prose existing. And though much is inevitably lost in a translation, there is literary charm in the *Banquet*² as translated by Shelley, or in the *Republic* or *Phaedo* in Jowett's English. A single dialogue well chosen from a list of those in which the literary form is most studied—and these are the more dramatic dialogues—will give an attentive reader a vivid impression at once of Plato's genius and of the characteristics of the Platonic Socrates.

The Dialogues.—There are in all thirty-five dialogues with some claim to be accounted genuine, and of these twenty-four may reasonably be accepted as genuine beyond question³. The subjects are very varied. The easiest to read are the *Apology*—not properly a dialogue, but a study of the speeches made by Socrates to the Athenian dicasts, when tried for his life,—the *Crito*,

¹ Twice in the *Apology* (34 A and 38 B), and once at the beginning of the *Phaedo* (59 B).

² *Convivium* in Latin, in Greek *Symposium*

³ Thrasyllus, in the first century A.D. established a *canon* of the writings of Plato which contains in all thirty-six works, thirty-five dialogues and a volume of Epistles. The probabilities are against the genuineness of the epistles.

the *Gorgias*, and the first four books of the *Republic*. No writing of Plato's is quite easy reading, but the more metaphysical dialogues like the *Parmenides*, the *Sophist*, the *Statesman*, the *Philebus*, and parts of the *Republic*, require a natural taste for abstract thinking. If one dialogue is to be singled out, no better choice could be made than the *Gorgias*, which enshrines the sublimest moral doctrines that Plato anywhere teaches and at the same time affords apt illustration of the characteristic method of discussion attributed to Socrates. A course consisting of the *Gorgias*, the *Apology*, *Crito* and *Phaedo*, the *Republic*, the *Phaedrus* and the *Banquet*, would familiarize the reader with the most generally interesting and least technical of Plato's writings. There is special charm also in the *Lysis*, the *Laches*, the *Charmides*, the *Theaetetus*, while in the *Timaeus* and the *Critias* will be found the immortal myth of the island Atlantis.

The setting of the Dialogues.—Part of the charm of the more literary dialogues is found in their setting. They are full of touches which illustrate social life at Athens in a life-like way. For instance in the opening of the *Protagoras* Socrates describes how he was awakened early one morning by his friend Hippocrates, son of Apollo-dorus, and carried off to see the famous foreign teacher, Protagoras, in the house of Callias. The friends have a difficulty in obtaining admission through the surliness of the hall porter, who has no love for sophists, and takes Socrates and Hippocrates for two of them. Then the scene within is vividly brought before us, the crowd of admirers following Protagoras up and down the covered court as he talks, Hippias of Elis seated in another court answering enquiries on physics and astronomy, while Prodicus of Ceos is in bed holding forth to a select few. One of the most dramatic openings is that of the *Theaetetus*. Euclides of Megara (the philosopher not the geometrician) meets his friend Terpsion and relates how he has just seen Theaetetus, a young Athenian of noble family and splendid promise, being carried home to Athens at the point of death. Theaetetus had been wounded in the

fighting at Corinth,¹ then attacked by dysentery. This recalls a notable conversation between Theaetetus and Socrates some years before, of which Euclid possesses an account in writing, and this account is the dialogue. Most often the scene is some palaestra or wrestling-ground at Athens as in the *Charmides* and the *Lysis*. In the *Phaedrus* it is a shady spot by the Ilissus. To this place Socrates has been brought by Phaedrus whom he meets near the city-wall and who carries him off to listen to a discourse on love composed by Lysias, son of Cephalus, the roll of which Phaedrus had with him. The scene of two dialogues, the *Crito* and the *Phaedo*, is the Town-Jail, in which Socrates was kept after his trial and condemnation. In the former Crito is represented as coming very early to the prison with the news that the sacred ship from Delos has returned, and consequently the day when Socrates must die is very near. And he tries to persuade Socrates to escape while there is time. But Socrates will not listen. He holds that to do so would be false to his own principles of loyalty to his country's laws and would stultify his whole life and teaching.

The Myths of Plato.—Plato is poet and prophet no less than philosopher and at certain points in the dialogues, where dialectic argument fails, he leaves the dialogue form of exposition and seeks expression for the truth he wishes to convey through imaginative stories. These stories from their resemblance to the stories of traditional mythology,² are conveniently known as 'myths'. The myths of Plato are not usually allegories, though some of his stories are allegories, or in part allegories.³ Two of the most famous are in the *Republic*, the allegory of the Cave and the myth of Er—the Pamphylian. The myth of Er is a vision of the Judgment of the Dead and of the fortunes of the soul after death. The allegory of the Cave explains by elaborate symbolism the disadvantage at which the philosopher finds himself in the transactions of ordinary life. He

¹ In 394, five years after Socrates' death

² Vol 1 p 59

³ Stewart (J A), *The Myths of Plato*, p 20; 230, and 243-4

who has dwelt for a time in the full light of reality is dazed and half-blinded when he comes back to the twilight of ignorance in which most men live. In the *Phaedrus* is another myth of the soul's history and destiny which includes the allegory of the Charioteer and Horses, a figure of the struggle in man's soul between his higher and lower nature, between passion and conscience. In the *Protagoras* is the myth of Prometheus and Epimetheus which illustrates man's need of the social virtues as well as the arts, to overcome his natural defencelessness in the animal world. We have already referred to the myth of Atlantis in the *Critias*, one of the most interesting because of its hint of a great continent beyond the Atlantic.¹ The whole of the *Timaeus*, most puzzling of the Dialogues for modern readers, but best known and most closely studied in the Middle Ages, is one vast Myth of Creation. A story from the *Phaedrus*, less well-known, but piquant from its sharp criticism of literacy, is as follows:

" Well, the story is that at Naucratis in Egypt was one of the ancient Egyptian gods—the god to whom belongs the sacred bird they call the Ibis, and the god's name is Theuth. This is the god who first discovered arithmetic and numbers, draughts and dice also, and what most concerns my story—the art of writing. The king of all Egypt at that time was Thamuz, whose seat was the great city of upper Egypt, which the Hellenes call Egyptian Thebes. and the god they call Ammon. To him came Theuth to show off his inventions, declaring that they ought to be communicated to the rest of the Egyptians. Thamuz enquired the use of each, and as Theuth went over them assigned praise or blame, according as he was satisfied, or not, with the account given. According to the story there was much that Thamuz said to Theuth in praise and blame of the various arts, which it would take too long to recount, but when they came to the art of writing, Theuth said, ' This invention, O king, will make

¹ See Stewart, p. 466 " I do not think it is necessary to suppose, or that it is even likely, that Plato had any sailors' stories of a great land beyond the Western Ocean on which to found his Myth "

the Egyptians wise and will improve their memories , my discovery is an elixir of memory and wisdom ” But Thamuz replied “ O most inventive Theuth, of a truth one man has skill to conceive and bring forth inventions, and another to judge of the good and harm they are like to bring to those who use them Now you who are father of the art of writing, through partiality ascribe to it an efficacy the very reverse of that which it possesses It will induce forgetfulness in the souls of those who learn it through disuse of their own memories, seeing they will rely for remembrance on an external thing, writing, by means of characters which are no part of themselves, not on a power within them , it is an elixir of prompting the memory you have discovered, not of memory. You are furnishing your disciples with the appearance of wisdom not with anything true They will by your means become loaded with information without teaching and they will deem themselves well-instructed, though they will for the most part be ignorant and difficult to deal with, inasmuch as they have become seeming-wise but not wise ” ¹

Plato's Humour.—All the dialogues have a serious purpose , those which are associated with the prosecution and death of Socrates contain masterly touches of pathos. Some are lightened by the play of a delicate humour peculiarly Platonic The more subtle forms of this humour are widely distributed Here and there we come across a studied elaboration of comic effects One example is Aristophanes' description in the *Banquet* of the primitive round-bodied race of men : they had four arms and four legs, and two faces, though only one head on a round neck. They walked as men do now, but if they wished to go fast, they used all eight limbs, four arms and four legs, to whirl themselves round wheel-wise. They were strong and insolent and, like the giants, tried to conquer Heaven. And Zeus, to bring down their pride, slit them in two, thus producing the present race of men with two arms and two legs. Aristophanes adds a warning There is reason to fear that if mankind are guilty of any additional impiety

¹ *Phaedrus*, 274 c-275 B

towards the gods, "we may be cut in two again, and may go about like those figures painted on columns, divided through the middle of our nostrils, as thin as split dice" Or there is the description in the *Republic* of the blustering Thrasymachus when forced by Socrates to contradict himself "Now these admissions were not made by Thrasymachus in this easy way, but they had to be dragged from him against his will, and—the day being hot—the exertion made him stream with perspiration and then I saw a sight I had never seen before—Thrasymachus blushing" Or again in the *Laches* the delightful picture of Stesilaus and his scythe-spear "This fellow Stesilaus," Laches is made to say, "whom you and I together saw in so large a company making a display and talking big about himself in the way he did, I saw to better advantage elsewhere, in real truth making an exhibition of himself without meaning to The ship on which he was marine had engaged a merchantman He was fighting with a scythe-spear—a remarkable weapon, just as he was a remarkable man The rest of his adventures are not worth relating, but only the result of this invention of a scythe on the end of a spear. As he fought it got entangled somehow in the ship's rigging and stuck fast So Stesilaus kept tugging away at it trying to disentangle it, but could not Meanwhile the ships were crossing. For a time he ran along by the gunwale, clinging on to the spear, but when the other ship was passing his and was dragging him on holding on to the spear, he let the spear slip through his hands till he clung to the end of the butt. The crew of the merchantman laughed and cheered at his get-up, and when someone threw a stone at his feet on the deck and he let go the spear, his companions on the trireme could no longer contain their laughter, when they saw that wonderful scythe-spear swinging in the air from the rigging of the merchantman."¹

Plato's Ideas.—Attempts have been made to construct out of the dialogues with their penetrating sifting of opinion, their provisional conclusions, and their flashing

¹ *Laches*, 183 c-184 a, translated by Lionel James

side-lights on truth, a complete and self-consistent system of thought. It may be doubted whether such an achievement is possible, and, at any rate, the attempt is far beyond the scope of this chapter. But something ought, perhaps, to be said of the conception which is the centre and pivot of Plato's doctrine of reality—the Doctrine of Ideas.

Our word 'idea,' though taken from the Greek, does not help to our understanding of the Platonic doctrine of reality, but rather hinders. The word has passed through many changes of meaning, and the popular use of 'idea' is now very loose and vague, as in the phrase, 'I have no *idea* what you mean', 'He has no lack of *ideas*', 'It had become a fixed *idea* with him.' The most frequent, and on the whole most proper, meaning of the word in English now is what is technically called a 're-presentation,' that is, any mental image of an impression of sense. The sound of a motor horn is an impression of sense, or 'presentation', the revival of that sound in memory is a 're-presentation'. Similarly, a scene before the eyes and the recollection of the scene afterwards are 'presentation' and 're-presentation.' But what Plato meant by an 'Idea' was the universal and eternal form of any class of things which has a number of particular objects included within it. We perceive through our senses individual men, and particular objects like tables and chairs. Plato seeking, after the example of Socrates, to reach the unity which lies behind the use of general names, suggests that there must be an ideal man, chair, table, of which the tables and chairs and men of ordinary experience are imperfect copies. And equally there must be an idea of beds, books, roses, insects, and of all the multitudinous classes of things that make up the material universe. It may take a good deal of time before those unused to reflection see any meaning at all in this use of Idea, but it requires no great effort of thought from anyone who has once reflected on the puzzle of general names. What is it that the individual things which we call by general names have in common? It is not easy to say when we get away from

the obvious classes which every one recognizes, and ask this question about such things, for instance, as *stone*, *metal*, *hat*, *shrub*, *vegetable*, and still more of such difficult terms as *freedom*, *right*, *labour*, *capital*, *value*. We see at once, also, how this question is bound up with the problem of definition, at which Socrates was working. Sometimes it seems as if Plato meant literally that ideal forms, or archetypes, of all classes of material things, changeless and always the same, exist in a *world of intelligence* apart from the senses, and have more reality than the things of sense (which shift and change in countless ways as we look at or handle them)—are indeed the only reality. But more probably he is only serious about qualities and abstractions—*beauty*, *justice*, *health*, *courage*, *knowledge*¹. What was the underlying reality of each of these? Men's everyday notions seemed so various and so confused. It was for the sake of these truths, so vital to know, that Plato formulated, sometimes playfully, sometimes in earnest, his doctrine of Ideas.² For the better understanding of these the theory was illuminating. The reality of Justice and Beauty and Knowledge is something beyond and above things just and beautiful and known. From these 'ideas' Plato was led on to the conception of an Idea of Good, and so to the Idea of the Good, the supreme reality, only verbally distinguishable from the infinite perfection of the Godhead.

Justice.—But the doctrine of Ideas is metaphysical, and while some find in it the culmination of all philosophy and the secret of reality, to others it is merely incomprehensible, not mystic but mystifying. There is another side to Plato's idealism which is of the nature of a moral revelation, and which even a child may understand. It

¹ This precise issue is raised by Plato himself at the beginning of the *Parmenides*, 130 B.

² A good way to reach out towards Plato's meaning is to think of mathematical conceptions, *line*, *circle*, *diameter*, *equality*—illustrations used by Plato himself in the *Phaedo*. The lines and circles the mathematician treats of are not those of sense, for these all deviate from his definitions. We never reach absolute equality through the senses, but we have the idea of it.

is the conviction that righteousness, justice all that we mean by virtue as opposed to injustice, wickedness and vice, is the true good for men, inestimably desirable in itself independently of any gain or loss that goes with it, that in very truth virtue is its own reward, because virtue is the health and well-being of the soul. In the *Republic* Socrates sets out to ask what is justice; and he easily refutes the overbearing sophist, Thrasymachus, who maintains (as many maintain to this day) that Justice is the interest of the stronger. And then Socrates is assailed by Glaucon and Adeimantus, Plato's brothers, who put to him certain deeper difficulties concerning the nature of justice and injustice. Glaucon and Adeimantus object that justice is cried up and valued not in itself as good but for the sake of its rewards, the reputation and prosperity it brings in this life, and the favour of Heaven in the life to come, and yet more because of the pains and penalties of injustice, not least to the evil-doer himself, when he is found out. How are we to be satisfied that justice is not after all merely a more cunning sort of prudence? For were the just man free to do wrong without fear of discovery and punishment, he would be found no better than the unjust. The only convincing test of the contrary—that is, that the just man chooses justice for its own sake—would be to eliminate all the rewards that wait upon virtue and the penalties that follow vice. We must compare the perfectly just man and the perfectly unjust. The perfectly unjust man must be so accomplished a scoundrel that by his cunning and strength combined he can escape all the ill consequences of injustice and even win a reputation for virtue, “for it is the very consummation of wickedness to seem just without being just.” Then with such a consummate scoundrel we must compare “some man of noble simplicity, who resolves, in the words of Aeschylus,¹ not to seem but to be good. And we must take from him the seeming. For if he shall be reputed just, he will possess all the honours and rewards which come to one so reputed, and then it will

¹ *Seven against Thebes*, 592

be uncertain whether he is just for the sake of justice itself, or for the sake of honours and rewards So we must strip him of everything but his righteousness, and make his fortune precisely the reverse of the other's , without ever doing wrong he must have the reputation of being extremely wicked. in order that his righteousness may be thoroughly tested by taking no taint from evil repute and its consequences And so he must continue without relief, until his death, being esteemed wicked all his life-time, though he is righteous In this way if the two are brought to an extreme, the one of righteousness, the other of wickedness, it may be judged which of the two is more happy." There can be no doubt, Glaucon maintains, what—in common opinion—the result must be The one who is consummately wicked will prosper throughout life in every respect, and, may be, even win the favour of heaven, because he has ample means of paying his dues in prayer and sacrifice The other, the perfectly righteous man, who in popular judgment is esteemed wicked, " will be scourged, tormented, thrown into bondage , he will have his eyes burnt out, and after enduring every extremity of suffering will end by being impaled "

The whole of the rest of the *Republic* is an elaborate argument to refute this position and prove the paradox that even were such an extreme case possible (which, of course, it is not),¹ the righteous man in his unmerited suffering is better off and happier than the unrighteous in his undeserved prosperity For unrighteousness, vice, injustice are the sickness and ruin of man's soul, while righteousness, virtue, justice are its health and welfare

The reasonings of the *Republic* are worth weighing, and they are metaphysically and logically sound The conclusion for most men must be a matter of faith even more than of reasoning It is a saving faith, and the enunciation of this moral and religious truth—that goodness is to be sought and loved for its intrinsic quality, not for its external results , that virtue *in itself* is better than vice,

¹ Before the end of the *Republic* the admissions made at the outset are expressly taken back , see Book X 612 and 613

love than hate, justice than injustice—is the inspired culmination of Plato's teaching and the supreme gift to mankind of Hellenic thought, the pearl of great price for which a man may well sell all else that he has

3 ARISTOTLE

“... a guide to the book of Nature, a revealer of the Spirit, a prophet of the works of God.”

D'ARCY THOMPSON in *The Legacy of Greece*, p 160

There is one other Greek teacher whose place in the history of European thought is not less important than Socrates' and Plato's, namely Aristotle. He was not an Athenian like Socrates and Plato, but a Greek of Chalcidicê, from Stagira, a small city state on the coast of Macedonia half way between the peninsula ending in Mount Athos and Amphipolis, his family came with the first settlers from Chalcis in Euboea. But though not an Athenian by birth, Aristotle spent quite half his life at Athens. Of less dominating character than Socrates, and far below Plato as a master of literary style, he yet surpassed them both in the extent and thoroughness of his scientific attainments. His philosophy is the culmination of the efforts to think out the meaning of the universe which began in Ionia with Thales of Miletus. He summed up all the knowledge of his time, and not only gave it scientific form, but divided and co-ordinated its parts on systematic principles. His is, in fact, the first philosophical *system* at once scientific and complete. His thought, as we have it, is expressed not in conversations like Socrates', nor in dialogues like Plato's, but in formal treatises. Aristotle's writings embrace Logic, Physics, Metaphysics, Psychology, Natural History, Physiology, Meteorology, Political Philosophy, Ethics, Rhetoric, and Criticism. This is an astonishing range of achievement. “How a single man could have done all that he did in so many departments, is almost unconceivable”¹. For in every branch of knowledge Aristotle either sums up all that was known to previous

¹ Davidson, *Aristotle* (in Great Educator Series), p 158

thinkers and makes a notable advance beyond them, or breaks entirely new ground and lays out the framework of a science which has ever since been recognized as having a distinct subject-matter. His writings, as we possess them, do not pretend to the literary charm of Plato's. Their most striking characteristic is their pregnant terseness. Sometimes they are so like lecture notes that they have been taken to be veritably such¹. Yet scattered through them, and especially in the ethical books, are passages of lofty eloquence.

His Life.—A few personal details about Aristotle have been handed down by his biographers, but the earliest biography extant now is that of Diogenes Laertius, and he lived some five hundred years after Aristotle's death, so that no very great confidence can be felt in his accuracy. If his description may be accepted, Aristotle in the flesh was of slender build, very careful of his personal appearance, and even something of a dandy. Perhaps the most remarkable event in his personal history was his association with Alexander the Great as tutor. This came about naturally through hereditary connection with the Macedonian royal family, for Nicomachus, his father, was court physician to Amyntas II, king of Macedon, and his personal friend². We have already noticed that great part of Aristotle's life was spent at Athens. For twenty years he was Plato's disciple, the most admired of the students of the Academy. For twelve years, from 335 to 323, he was head of a rival school, which he established in the Lyceum, a gymnasium on the opposite side of Athens, just outside the walls, and because he was wont to pace up and down the walks there (*peripatōe*) as he lectured, his philosophy has come to be called 'Peripatetic.'

¹ What exactly the writings which have come down to us as Aristotle's really are is a puzzle never likely to be solved. The manuscripts from which we get our texts have a very curious history. It may be read in Strabo the Geographer's 13th book, chapter 56. Or see Sir Alexander Grant's *Aristotle* (in *Ancient Classics for English Readers*), pp. 33-35.

² The family was a branch of a clan which traced its descent from the god Asclepius (Aesculapius), they were all hereditary physicians from father to son.

He died in 322, being then only 62 years of age.¹ It is curious that this was also the year of the death of Demosthenes, the statesman and orator. They were almost exact contemporaries, but the circumstances of their lives drew them to opposite sides in the national conflict. Demosthenes was sworn enemy of the house of Philip, while Aristotle was born into friendly association with it.

The Aristotelian Tradition.—It is difficult to say which of the two great masters, Plato and Aristotle, has had most influence on European thought. In spite of their relation as master and disciple the two men represent opposite tendencies of the human mind. It was Coleridge who said that every one “is born either a Platonist or an Aristotelian,”² a Platonist if the tendency of his mind is to soar away from the things of sense and find rest among abstractions, an Aristotelian if he is drawn rather to the concrete and real. The Aristotelian attitude of mind favours more naturally the progress of natural science. The Alexandrian schools of experimental science are a continuation of the influence of Aristotle. When in the ninth century A.D. the Abbasid Khalifs established their government at Baghdad and began to encourage learning, Aristotle’s writings were translated into Arabic. Hence it came about that the writings of Aristotle were preserved in Arabic versions when the originals were lost to Western Europe. When by means of the Crusades European and Arabian thought were brought into close contact, mediaeval scholars translated the works of Arabian doctors into French and Latin, and Aristotle became known again in Western Europe as the great thinker and

¹ His will, the text of which is given by Diogenes Laertius, is illuminating of the character of the man. His second wife, Herpyllis, who survives him, is to be helped to marry again, ‘because she has behaved so well towards me.’ But for the wife of his youth, who predeceased him, his affection is different: her bones are to be taken up and buried with him ‘as she herself charged.’ Nicanor, his friend and executor, is to marry his daughter. There is careful remembrance of faithful servants and provision is made for their enfranchisement. “Every clause,” it has been said, “breathes the philosopher’s humanity.”

² See *Table Talk*, under date July the 2nd, 1830.

teacher. And then by a strange irony of circumstances, for a time Aristotle became actually a stumbling-block in the way of the advance of knowledge. For Aristotle, imperfectly understood through translations, was taken under the patronage of the Church, and then every supposed doctrine of Aristotle was invested with full ecclesiastical authority. The state of knowledge resulting from this alliance between the mediaeval Church and Aristotle is known as Scholasticism, St Thomas Aquinas and Albertus Magnus being the chief schoolmen, and to break the bonds of scholasticism was the achievement of Francis Bacon and the thinkers of the later Renaissance. Science knows neither Pope nor Bible, but the text of Aristotle, or rather the confused and perverted doctrine of Aristotle—was used to thwart the spirit of Aristotle, which was the spirit of free scientific investigation. To free the spirit of man for the tasks of modern science, the unquestioned authority of Aristotle's precepts had to be shattered. But it was shattered only by a fresh application of the spirit of independent research by which Aristotle himself had been guided.

Aristotle's Works.—We have no key to the order in which Aristotle's works were composed. It cannot be known certainly whether he advanced, like Herbert Spencer, in accordance with an orderly plan, or wrote his several treatises¹ without set order, as this or that branch of universal knowledge occupied his attention. It is perplexing that a detailed and extensive list given by Diogenes corresponds very imperfectly with the titles and contents of Aristotle's works as we possess them. In our brief review here we may follow the ordinary classification from the more abstract to the more concrete—from Logic

¹ Perhaps 'treatises' is not the proper term to apply to Aristotle's surviving writings, at least not in the sense of formal and finished treatises. The account of them which agrees best with appearances is that of a body of detached writings which a teacher keeps by him for lecture purposes, and alters and amplifies as occasion arises. Other works of his there were, dialogues and poems, which have been entirely lost. Cicero knew the dialogues and quotes them as examples of eloquent style.

and Metaphysics through Physical treatises of all kinds to Natural History and the more human studies, Ethics, Politics, Rhetoric, Criticism. The branches of science and art are now carefully differentiated and the distinctions are familiar. But this clear differentiation is in large part the work of Aristotle. Before him Physics and Metaphysics, Ethics and Politics were imperfectly distinguished, Logic and Psychology had no separate existence. Socrates was the first to struggle to arrive at clearer definition, and Plato continued the process of discrimination. But thinkers before Aristotle had only got so far as a broad distinction of enquiry into physical, practical, and poetical.

Logic.—India divides with Greece the honour of the invention of Logic. Greece has not an exclusive claim to the devising of a norm or standard, by which the conclusiveness of reasoning might be tested, but the Greek forms of *syllogism* may claim to be the simpler, and easier to apply. And these, as he expressly affirms,¹ are the discovery of Aristotle. Logic is the science which discusses the means of testing the correctness of human reasoning and examines the processes connected with reasoning. It distinguishes between true reasoning and false, and shows how the one may be known from the other. Aristotle did not himself give the name of Logic to this science, but among his works is a number of tracts under various names, *Categories*, *Interpretation*, *Analytic*.² In these he treats of terms and propositions and predicables, of induction and deduction, of syllogisms and fallacies. All the details of the modern handbook of Logic are found in these treatises and are taken from them.

Metaphysics.—We now mean by metaphysics the investigation of ultimate first principles, the presuppositions required to make knowledge and existence intelligible. We get the name from Aristotle's editors; and

¹ In the last chapter of his work on fallacies (*De Sophisticis Elenchis*)

² The logical treatises were at one time known as the *Organum*, or 'Instrument,' with the implication that Logic is the instrument by means of which other sciences reach their conclusions.

it only means the books which follow or *come after* *Physics*. In his metaphysical books Aristotle discusses Plato's *ideas* and gives his own theory of the ultimate nature of Being or Substance, of Matter, and of Cause¹. These are the most abstract of all conceptions and consequently the most difficult. It is most difficult of all to find words to express what we mean ultimately by reality and being. In the last resort explanation is impossible: what is possible is analysis. Plato as the outcome of analysis found 'Ideas,' the eternal, changeless, types of existing things. Aristotle's contribution to the solution is the distinction of *form* and *matter*, and the distinction has permanent value. In every existing thing we can discern these two aspects, there is the crude formless matter of the thing, and there is the form which makes it what it is. In a statue we can obviously distinguish the marble, as matter, from the form. But again in the marble itself also the distinction into matter and form may be repeated.

Psychology.—Aristotle's psychological writings are intensely interesting to psychologists, but are not very helpful to a beginner. There is an initial difficulty about the words to be used. For although our word psychology is derived from the Greek *psychē*, and psychology for us is the science of mind, Aristotle's *psychē* is not exactly our 'mind'; for plants to Aristotle have *psychē* (though they have not any form of sensation), and 'growth' or nutrition which is seen in plants as well as animals is the elementary form of *psychē*. And yet *psychē* is not *life*. Greek has another word for "life," *zōe*, which appears in Zoology. There is in nature an ascending manifestation of 'psychē' or 'soul' (1) nutrition and growth, common to plants and animals, (2) movement and sense-perception, common to all animals, (3) reason, the peculiar endowment of mankind. Again, Aristotle's definition of *psychē* is metaphysical, and unintelligible without a preliminary study of his metaphysics. And yet Aristotle was the first

¹ The distinction of causes as *material*, *efficient*, *formal*, and *final*, is Aristotle's.

thinker to treat mind scientifically in its proper relation to body, and has a claim to be considered the founder of Psychology hardly less than of Logic. Much of his treatment of the subject has only an historic interest, much of it is misleading now, but his services to the new science are great. In his opening sentence he makes a striking claim for the importance of Psychology. His treatment of memory and imagination anticipates much that finds place in modern books. His conception of the relation of mind and body shows an insight extraordinary in his day. We must "no more ask whether the soul and the body are one, than ask whether the wax and the figure impressed upon it are one."¹ "And yet," he says elsewhere, "nothing prevents" a possible separation from the body of some higher form of soul, perhaps *that soul is in the body "like a sailor in a boat"*²

Physics.—In Physics, which for Aristotle means (as the name implies) in a wide sense Science of *Nature*, he is following up speculations that go back to the beginnings of Greek philosophy. While he says much that is ingenious about movement, time, and space, he is a long way from modern Physics with its familiar division into Sound, Heat, Light, Electricity. His scientific writings include treatises on the movements of the heavenly bodies, on meteorology, and nearly twenty books on Natural History, that is on Zoology and Physiology.

Natural History.—Perhaps the most amazing achievement of Aristotle's scientific industry is these twenty or so books on Natural History. In the nine books of his Enquiry concerning Animals (*Historia Animalium*) he passes in review the whole animal creation, and though he nowhere outlines a formal classification, he shows incidentally that he recognizes the main distinctions which now form the framework of scientific Zoology. More surprising than the comprehensiveness of this survey is the keenness of his interest in all living creatures and the accuracy of his observation. In no qualified sense he

¹ *De Anima*, II 1 7, Wallace, p 61

² *De Anima*, II 1 13.

was (three hundred years before Christ) a great biologist, "biology was in his hands," D'Arcy Thompson says in the *Herbert Spencer Lecture* of 1913, "a true and comprehensive science" "When he treats of Natural History, his language is our language, and his methods and his problems are well nigh identical with ours. He had familiar knowledge of a thousand varied forms of life, of bird and beast and plant and creeping thing He was careful to note their least details of outward structure, and curious to probe by dissection into their parts within" He is particularly full and precise in his description of marine animals, and the reason seems to be that his study of natural history took place mainly during a two-years residence on the shores of the island of Lesbos, when he was about forty years of age¹ The frequency with which he mentions places in Lesbos in illustrating his statements makes this probable

Even more interesting are his four books *On the Parts of Animals* (*De Partibus Animalium*), together with his short work on *Respiration*, for these contain his physiological observations and theories Aristotle was working under great disadvantages, and it is not surprising that he is more often wrong in his conclusions than right What else indeed was possible in so difficult a field before the necessity of experiment as a supplement to direct observation was understood² The importance of accurate observation Aristotle understands fully, but he is far from realizing that observation alone is not enough His most successful achievement in physiology is to have described the structure of the lungs with a very fair degree of accuracy On the other hand his theory of respiration, though ingenious, appears now merely fantastic It is only trained students of science who can

¹ This fact which Prof D'Arcy Thompson's brilliant elucidation makes very probable is of great importance in the full understanding of Aristotle's philosophy as a whole For it follows that it was as a trained biologist that he approached the ultimate problems of philosophy

² That Aristotle practised dissection with his own hand is practically certain, but to what extent cannot be known Several times in the *History of Animals* he refers to a book of anatomical diagrams, which has unfortunately been lost.

judge properly of the difficulties under which Aristotle worked and measure the greatness of his success. "By insisting on the absolute necessity of anatomical observation," says Dr William Ogle, "he carried biology at one step from the world of dreams into the world of realities; he set the science on a substantial basis, and may indeed be said to have been its founder, for the vain imaginings of his predecessors can hardly be dignified with the name of science"¹ Of his nine books of the *History of Animals* it has been said that "probably no work on Natural History of equal merit and completeness was written before Cuvier"² His greatest merit of all is the spirit in which he worked. In a memorable passage in Book I of the *Parts of Animals* Aristotle vindicates biological study from the reproach that it has to do with things trivial and ignoble "We therefore must not recoil with childish aversion from the examination of the humbler animals. Every realm of nature is marvellous and as Heraclitus, when the strangers who came to visit him found him warming himself at the furnace in the kitchen, is reported to have bidden them not to be afraid to enter, as even in that kitchen divinities were present, so we should venture on the study of every kind of animal without distaste, for each and all will reveal to us something natural and something beautiful"³ All this makes Aristotle's claim to be numbered among the very greatest of the world's creative thinkers very high Yet even this is scarcely his greatest claim of all

¹ Introduction to Aristotle *On Life and Death and on Respiration*, p 29

² D'Arcy Thompson, Introduction to Aristotle's *Historia Animalium*, p vii

³ Aristotle *On the Parts of Animals*, 1 5, Dr Ogle's translation, p 17 In what immediately precedes he says "Having already treated of the celestial world, as far as our conjectures could reach, we proceed to treat of animals, without omitting, to the best of our ability, any member of the kingdom, however ignoble. For if some have no graces to charm the sense, yet even these, by disclosing to intellectual perception the artistic spirit that designed them, give immense pleasure to all who can trace links of causation, and are inclined to philosophy" "He was the first of Greek philosophers and gentlemen," writes D'Arcy Thompson in *The Legacy of Greece* (p 144), "to see that all these things were good to know and worthy to be told. This was his great discovery"

Humane Studies.—However remarkable Aristotle's work in biology and natural history may be in relation to his time, the advance of knowledge in these sciences has inevitably made most of it obsolete. The natural sciences are ever moving on to new discoveries which correct the explanations accepted earlier. Consequently the greater part of Aristotle's results in this field are now out of date. They were, it is true, not out of date as recently as three hundred years ago, though nearly twenty centuries had passed since his death. But in the 17th century of the Christian era science in Europe made a new forward movement, which advanced with accelerated energy through the 18th and 19th, till the science of the 20th century has become something altogether different from the science of the 4th century B.C.¹ Aristotle's work in physiology and physics is now wholly superseded. But there are other spheres in which his teaching has not been superseded and never will be, because in dealing with this subject-matter he was not, as in Physics and Physiology, at a disadvantage compared with modern times. Man and society have not altered in essentials, though many relevant circumstances have greatly changed. In dealing with these subjects Aristotle has even an advantage over students of our own day. His problems were offered in a less complex form and could be treated with a freshness and clearness unattainable now. Hence the peculiar value of Aristotle's conclusions in Ethics and Political Philosophy. He analyses problems like our own in a simpler and more manageable shape.

Aristotle's Politics.—Aristotle's limitations as a political thinker are that his generalizations are all based on a study of the one hundred and fifty-eight city-states included in his great work on constitutions (all of which is lost to us except for a portion of the *Polity of the Athenians*),² supplemented by rather superficial reflections

¹ See vol 1 p. 14

² See above pp 88 and 89 and vol 1 pp 243 and 244. This incomplete but invaluable *Constitution of Athens* was recovered late in the nineteenth century, it was first edited for the Trustees of the British Museum by Sir Frederick Kenyon in 1890.

on different forms of monarchical rule. A constitutional national state like England in the 14th century, or republican France, or even the modern kingdom of the Hellenes, is altogether outside his range of vision. Could one such have been described to him, it is probable that he would have summarily repudiated the notion, he would have said it was no 'polis,' no constitutional state at all.¹ He would have objected that it was vastly too large, for, says Aristotle, "a great state is not the same thing as a populous."² "We see clearly," he says, "the best limit of population, it is that the number of citizens should be the largest possible in order to ensure independence of life, but not so large that it cannot be comprehended in a single view."³ And what he means by this last is curiously illustrated by an earlier remark on the over-populous state "Who could be town-crier," he asks, "for such a state, unless he had the voice of a Stentor?" Always he has in mind the city-state with from five to twenty, or at the utmost, thirty thousand able-bodied citizens. And we must add that to the city-state as he conceived it slavery was an economic necessity. Yet, if we consider attentively, we shall see that Aristotle is in the line of thought which leads directly to the League of Nations. For he conceives of the state from first to last as a moral institution. It exists as a means to noble living. The end for states and for individuals is the same.⁴ Justice between states is as necessary as justice between individual men living in community, and "as in his condition of complete development, that is in the state, man is the noblest of all animals, so apart from law and justice he is the vilest of all."⁵ Militarism is wrong, and is proved to be wrong by the teachings of history.⁶ Valour and endurance are, indeed, indispensable virtues in states since "a people incapable

¹ He does, however, in one place (iv 7), say of the Hellenes, that "if they were united in a single polity they would be capable of universal empire" (Welldon, p 181)

² *Politics*, iv 4, Welldon, p 174

³ iv 4, Welldon, p 176

⁴ iv 14 and 15, Welldon, pp 207-8

⁵ i 2, Welldon, p 7

⁶ iv 14, Welldon, p 206

of facing dangers valorously are the slaves of every assailant,”¹ But more than this is required in the state where noble living is the end. We are brought at last to the positions, that education is a main concern of the state, and that the noble employment of leisure is the true end of education. “ For if the right conduct of business and the noble employment of leisure are both requisite, and at the same time leisure is preferable to business and is the end of human existence, we are bound to investigate the right manner of employing leisure.”² And we are made to see that in this lies the importance of the artistic side of education. For this reason training in music and in the art of design are parts of a liberal education,—in the art of design that the young may come to be “ scientific observers of physical beauty”³, in music, because it is valuable for the noble employment of leisure. “ We see clearly,” writes Aristotle, “ that there is a certain education which our sons should receive not as being practically useful, nor as indispensable, but as liberal and noble.”⁴ He has something also to say in this connection of the cult of athletics. Gymnastic training has its indispensable place in his scheme of education, or it would not be Hellenic at all, but “ to give up our children overmuch to bodily exercises and leave them uninstructed in the true essentials of education, is in effect to degrade them to the level of mechanics by rendering them useless in a statesman’s hands for any purpose except one and, as our argument shows, not so useful as other people even for this.”⁵ These are, perhaps, the most valuable aspects of Aristotle’s teaching in the *Politics*. But scattered about the eight books of this treatise is a wealth of political wisdom and practical good sense. It is hardly too much to say that in spite of the vast difference of scale between the modern nation and the little republics that Aristotle has in view these books have lost little of their value.

¹ *Politics*, iv 15; Welldon, p 208 ² v 3, Welldon, p 226

³ v 4, Welldon, p 229 On the whole subject of artistic education among the Greeks see Freeman, *Schools of Hellas*, pp 117 and 257-258

⁴ v 4, Welldon, p 228

⁵ v 4, Welldon, p 231

with the passage of time, and in some respects have even gained

The Nicomachean Ethics.—But of all his works that which has the greatest positive value to-day is the “*Ethics*.” In Aristotle’s view Ethics and Politics are interrelated, and his ‘*Politics*,’ therefore, are best appreciated in close association with his ethical theory. The work in which Aristotle’s theory of conduct is most fully and effectively expounded is that known as the *Nicomachean Ethics* in ten books. It is not too much to say that no work on Ethics of equal extent is of so great a value—for lucidity, for stimulus, for good sense and sound reasoning. “Notwithstanding some rather serious defects of form and arrangement,” writes Marshall in the preface to his book on *Aristotle’s Theory of Conduct* “it is still the best introduction to moral philosophy, the earliest and, take it for all in all, the most interesting book on the subject”¹. “Aristotle’s Ethics is one of the books which will never be forgotten or superseded. It is the first attempt in any European language to formulate a comprehensive theory of conduct”². No modern treatise on conduct can do for us what Aristotle’s Ethics can do, for no modern treatise can approach the subject with the same naïveté. Moral problems to-day are obscured by faint reminiscences of old controversies which overspread them like a sort of mildew—controversies regarding free-will and necessity, or the paradox of the selfishness of self-sacrifice. The very terms in which we speak of them have become sophisticated—it is almost impossible to think of them simply. In Aristotle’s presentment we get the problems in their simplicity, free from these accretions. In following his thought we are better able to reach the problem in its essence for we reach it at a simpler stage of human experience. Nothing more is possible here than to indicate some excellent points in Aristotle’s handling of the subject.

He begins by asking what is the end and aim of life. He takes it as self-evident that all human activities, like the arts, have an aim or end, and that mediate and

¹ *Aristotle’s Theory of Conduct*, p. 6

² P. 16

partial ends lead on to some end beyond themselves, as the making of bit and bridle is subordinate to horsemanship, horsemanship to the art of war, the art of war to victory. From this he goes on to infer that there must be some supreme end for life as a whole, to which *all* particular aims are subordinate. This supreme end is called 'happiness,' and happiness Aristotle defines as conscious activity guided by virtue¹. Happiness is an end pursued for its own sake only, and it is the end for which all lesser aims whatever are pursued. It is all-sufficing, in need of nothing beyond itself—it is of all things best and noblest, and is accompanied by the greatest pleasure. Happiness requires, indeed, as conditions of its realization, certain favouring circumstances—a measure of wealth, and health, of fortune and friends. Yet it does not consist in material things, in its essential nature it is this active exercise of virtue, in which alone is found the proper function of man's being. This position is reached in the first eight chapters of the first book, which contain the pith of Aristotle's ethical doctrine, the rest of the treatise is mainly a development of this conception of a life of activity in accordance with virtue. For human nature is diverse—there are virtues of man's intellectual powers and virtues of his moral nature. The intellectual virtues are five—*art, science, prudence, wisdom, reason*—they are "the modes in which the soul reaches truth in affirmation and negation"². The moral virtues, which are what we ordinarily mean in English when we talk of virtue, are courage, self-control, liberality, munificence, magnanimity, courtesy, truthfulness, geniality, friendliness. Aristotle explains these moral virtues as forming each a golden mean between extremes of excess

¹ *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1 7 15, literally "activity of soul (pschyhē) in accordance with virtue". Of course Aristotle is well aware that happiness is variously conceived by different persons, and even by the same person at different times—as *pleasure, riches, health, virtue* and so on. His definition claims to rise to a philosophical conception of happiness having universal validity.

² *Nic. Eth.* vi 3 1. The Greek words cannot be adequately rendered in English. They can be understood only through Aristotle's account of them.

and defect (these extremes being contrasted vices), as courage is a mean between recklessness and timidity, liberality a mean between extravagance and parsimony. Aristotle has striking things to say about each of these. Most remarkable of all¹ is what he says about magnanimity, for the "man of a great spirit" seems to embody his own personal ideal he does, in fact, say that the man of a great spirit must possess all the other virtues

For our practical purpose here the most important point is that Aristotle (herein following Plato and Socrates) lays down that the supreme good of man, or happiness, is unattainable without moral virtue. He is not committed to the stoic paradox that the good man is happy even if afflicted with every misfortune, or falsely accused and put to torture. In fact he deliberately repudiates this paradox². But he does say that the happiness that comes from virtuous living is the most steadfast and abiding happiness. "All his life with little exception he will be engaged in virtuous action and virtuous contemplation; he will bear nobly all turns of fortune and at all times and in all ways behave conformably, at least if he is our truly good man, our man of perfect mould"³. And again, "never could one who was truly happy become wretched, since he will never do what is mean and hateful.

¹ 'Remarkable,' but not at all points admirable, still less lovable. Embodied in the flesh this 'man of a great soul' would be insupportable. He is free of the meaner vices and of large stature, morally and intellectually, but a colossal egotist. The best that can be said for him is what Henry V says of himself

"But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive"

Aristotle's whole treatment of the moral virtues is open to criticism. He is best on *Courage* and on *Friendship*. To *Friendship* he devotes two whole books (viii and ix), and these make one of the most interesting disquisitions on the subject in all literature. A sentence from his opening chapter gives his standpoint. "Indeed without friends," he says, "no one would choose to go on living, though possessed of every other advantage"

² 1 5 6 "Or again he might fall into the utmost misfortune and affliction, and one who lived thus no one would call happy, unless it were for the sake of argument"

³ 1 10 11.

We conceive indeed that he who is truly good and wise will bear every fortune becomingly and turn the circumstances of his lot ever to fairest account, even as a good commander uses the forces under his orders in the manner best for the purposes of war, and a leather-cutter will make the best shoe he can out of the leather put into his hands ”¹ He recognizes that his happy man may meet with sore affliction and admits that afflictions mar happiness , but he adds . “ Nevertheless even in these afflictions nobility shines conspicuous, when a man bears many heavy misfortunes without impatience, not through want of feeling, but because he is noble-natured, and of a great spirit ”²

Rhetoric and Criticism.—There is a deal of human nature in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and much acute psychological observation, but the treatise as a whole is unattractive Its range is comprehensive . it begins with a book on *Proofs*, and ends with one on *Style*, an intermediate book dealing with the influence of feelings and character. Aristotle defends the formal study of the means of persuasion on the ground that if it is concerned with a kind of skill which may be abused, the same may be said “ of all good things except virtue ” And yet in places his argument bears a curiously painful resemblance to the art of making the worse appear the better reason For he shows how every argument is double-edged, and urges “ We must take whichever view may serve ”³

It is otherwise with the few chapters on Poetry, which is all we have left of Aristotle's critical writings, their every authentic⁴ sentence is golden The *Poetics* has invaluable, though scanty, notes on the origin of tragedy and comedy and a full and interesting discussion of tragedy Its most famous and most valuable chapter is the sixth, which includes Aristotle's definition of tragedy and its function His definition runs “ Tragedy is the representation of an

¹ *Nic. Eth.* 1 10 13

² 1 10 12

³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, ii 23 15 , Jebb, p 127

⁴ The text is in an unusually bad state even for a work of Aristotle Not only is the text faulty, but there are obvious interpolations and omissions

action serious and complete, and of a certain magnitude, in language made attractive in each kind in its different parts, shown in the doing, not narrated by pity and fear effecting the purging of emotions of these kinds "¹" To consider this theory of purgation, or any other of the interesting problems raised in the *Poetics*, would carry us too far. But no student of poetry or the drama can afford to neglect the *Poetics*.

Hellenic unity in the sphere of thought.—Plato and Socrates were Athenians, Aristotle was a man of Euboean descent from Chalcidicê. Yet Aristotle was the pupil of Plato and hands on the spiritual mantle received from Socrates. Athens was the home of the Peripatetic School no less than of Plato's Academy. Greek speculation and Greek science pass on from them in a single stream; philosophical writings were in Plato's Attic tongue. The earlier thinkers and teachers who preceded Socrates had been of many races and cities. Greek speculation begins at Miletus with Thales and the Ionian School to which Anaximenes and Anaximander also belong. Pythagoras was born in Samos, Empedocles at Agrigentum; Democritus at Abdera, Anaxagoras at Clazomenae. We may notice that the friends of Socrates are, many of them, not Athenians, Phaedo himself was an Elean, Echecrates was of Phlius, Simmias and Cebes, leading speakers in the *Phaedo*, were Thebans, and Euclides was of Megara. Though the exposition of Plato's doctrine in the *Laws* is put into the mouth of an Athenian, his interlocutors are a Spartan and a Cretan. The Sophists, Socrates' rivals, came from various Hellenic cities, Gorgias from Leontini, Protagoras from Abdera, Hippias from Elis, Prodicus from Ceos. Onward from Plato's day there is a difference. In spite of the strife and bloodshed of the Peloponnesian war Greek thought is Panhellenic; in spite of Aegospotami and the dissolution of the Athenian empire, Athens has won the unchallenged hegemony of Hellenic philosophy.

¹ Aristotle, *Poetics*.

CHAPTER XII

HISTORY AND THE GREEK HISTORIANS

“They were not the first to chronicle human events, but they were the first to apply criticism. And that means they originated history”
BURY, Harvard Lectures, 1909

The Standpoint of the Great Historians.—Philosophical speculation, then, while Athens was its chosen home, tended to become Panhellenic, the common possession of all men of Hellenic race. It is the same with the writing of history, though the way in which history acquires a Panhellenic character is different. Thucydides and Xenophon were Athenians. Herodotus was a Dorian of Halicarnassus, not an Athenian, nor even an Ionian, though at one time of his life he came under strong Athenian influences. All three wrote history from a broad national standpoint, not a narrow. Herodotus, the earliest in time, has actually the broadest outlook of the three, for he writes with a remarkable appreciation of oriental civilizations, does justice alike to the valour and loyalty of the Persian enemy, and holds the balance even between Greeks and Barbarians. Thucydides shows in unmistakable ways his love for Athens and his admiration of her greatness, yet he writes with entire dispassionateness of the growth of the Athenian *arché*, of the grounds of quarrel between the Peloponnesian and the Athenian leagues, of class strife at Corcyra or Samos, of Sparta’s jealous fears and pretensions. Thucydides writes history without any Athenian bias, at times, he seems to deal more severely with Athenian policy than with

Peloponnesian, and what he most clearly sees in the Peloponnesian war, and makes us see, is the havoc worked by Greeks upon Greeks, and the general demoralization caused by this fratricidal strife Xenophon, though characteristically Athenian in temperament and by education, is even more aloof from narrow Athenian sympathies He rests indeed under the imputation of a decided partiality for Sparta

Meaning of History.—The word history by derivation contains no implication of the sequence of events in time It belongs to a group of words connected with knowledge, and means 'enquiry' A history, as originally named, is simply an enquiry. The present meaning of the word, as a narrative of past events in their formal and causal sequences, is secondary The recorded history of Greece has a range of over two thousand years, from the seventh century B C to the fall of Constantinople, so that the fifth century B C, to which our survey has mainly been confined, is a very small fraction of the whole But that small fraction of the whole is, as was claimed at the outset, for our purpose of greater value than all the rest, and not least because the writers who have preserved the history of this century have set the pattern of all history to the western world If the Greeks did not *invent* history in its present sense, they certainly gave it a character different from any earlier history, and, we may add, from any later history written independently of Greek influence This we may test, if we will, by comparing the historical books of the Bible, Kalhana's *History of the Kings of Cashmīr*, the brick tablets of Babylonia and Assyria, or the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with Herodotus At bottom the difference is that implied by the original meaning of history. To the Greek history was a process of investigation, as it never has been to oriental writers The enquiring frame of mind readily turns to the critical, and in Thucydides passes into the deliberate sifting of evidence

I HERODOTUS

His Great Enquiry.—There were Greek writers in the domain of history before Herodotus, but we know very little about them. In particular there was Hecataeus of Miletus, but even of Hecataeus our knowledge is almost wholly confined to Herodotus' disparaging references. What led Herodotus to his great and comprehensive conception of history we do not know, but we have his own words, the opening words of his 'Enquiry,' defining the exact scope of his design: "There is here set forth the Enquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he took in hand in order that the events of the past might not be lost to remembrance, and that the great and wonderful doings of Greeks and Barbarians might not miss their meed of renown: incidentally, too, he designed to set forth the reasons why they warred one with the other." To the immense gain of succeeding ages he took a remarkably ample view of his subject. It is an integral part of his scheme to unfold the antecedents of all the principal nations that come into his story, and even of many comparatively unimportant tribes. His work has consequently been found a mine of anthropological, ethnological and antiquarian lore, as well as being our prime authority for the great Persian War. Fully half of his work consists of digressions he frankly says in one place—"indeed the addition of digressions came within the scope of my work from the beginning"¹ and some might say that the digressions, which comprise a large part of what we know at first hand of the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians, Lydians, Scythians, and the wild tribes of Africa in his time, are the most valuable part of his work. His method, which may be called a method of involution, is an interesting study in the art of construction. Herodotus wrote his whole history as a continuous narrative without division into 'books.' Our division into nine books is the work of an early Alexandrian

¹ Herodotus, iv 30 1

editor, but it has been well done, corresponding to divisions into which Herodotus' treatment naturally falls¹

Scheme of the Nine Books.—Herodotus as we have said, takes a large view of his theme. He has a vision of that age-long interaction of Europe and Asia, the flux and reflux of invasion, of which the latest episode was the on-sweep of the Turks across Asia Minor in September 1922, only stopped at the Bosphorus by the firm action of the British government of the day. He begins with mythical stories like the Rape of Io and the Trojan War, and dismissing these continues “I for my part am not going to say whether these things happened in accordance with one story or the other, but I will indicate who first to my knowledge began to inflict wrongs on the Hellenes and so go forward with my story, bringing in alike cities great and small, for the cities that were great aforetime have most of them become small, and those that are great in my day were formerly small”² This brings him to the Lydians, who were the first foreign power to attack the Greek settlements in Asia Minor. The Lydians lead on to the Persians, by whom the Lydian empire was overthrown. Croesus, king of the Lydians, was advised by the Delphic oracle to ally himself with the strongest of the Hellenic states, this gives opportunity for a description of Athens under Pisistratus and of Sparta in the sixth century B.C. The conquest of the Asiatic Greeks by the generals of Cyrus is described, and then the history to the end of Book I follows the expansion of the Persian Empire, the conquest of Caria and Lycia, the taking of Babylon, the conflict with the Massagetae in which Cyrus himself lost his life. Cyrus' son and successor, Cambyses, was the conqueror of Egypt this leads to a long disquisition on Egypt and the Nile, on the manners and customs, the monuments and the history of the Egyptians, which takes up the whole of Book II. Book III narrates the actual

¹ Bury remarks (*Harvard Lectures*, p. 38) that “this distribution perfectly exhibits the construction of the book and could not be improved by any change”

² Herodotus, I 5 3

conquest of Egypt and the wild doings attributed to Cambyses after it: and then we find we are being told of the 'wonders' of the island of Samos, and its tyrant (the friend of Amasis of Egypt) Polycrates, who after a career of amazing good fortune came to a horrible end · and through Polycrates we are led on to stories of Periander son of Cypselus, tyrant of Corinth The history of Persia through the reign of the usurper who personated Cambyses' murdered brother, Smerdis, the slaying of the false Smerdis, the accession of Darius and his organization of the Persian Empire, follow to the end of Book III And then we are among the mighty rivers and vast steppes of Southern Russia, through the greater part of Book IV For did not Darius undertake the famous Scythian expedition in which his forces barely escaped destruction after penetrating (if Herodotus' account can be believed) to the Volga ? These first four Books, which in bulk make up half the 'History,' are all preliminary to the main narrative, the conflict between Greeks and Persians which began with the Ionian Revolt in Book V It is argued with great probability that the last three books, the story of Xerxes' invasion and its repulse, were the first written,¹ the account of Egypt in Book II last of all . but, however that may be, the whole has been worked up with great skill into an artistic unity ²

Herodotus of Halicarnassus.—The history of Herodotus is one of those books in which the author draws his own portrait at full length, and the portrait of Herodotus which appears in the history is very human and amiable—not without engaging foibles His large humanity and open intelligence are, perhaps, the two qualities that shine out most conspicuously Prolix our author certainly is,

¹ See Introduction to Macan's *Herodotus*, iv-vi pp xcii-xciv

² Bury, in agreement with Macan concludes (*Harvard Lectures*, p 39) "Thus the unity of the whole composition sharply displays itself in three parts, of which each again is threefold The simplicity with which this architectural symmetry has been managed, without any apparent violence, constraint or formality, was an achievement of consummate craft" There is, however, also something to be said for a main division into two parts, (1) Books I to IV , (2) Books V to IX.

and perhaps a little vain, somewhat given to superstition, and decidedly avid of the marvellous. But these faults, if faults they are, are completely outweighed by his virtues, his eager desire for knowledge (inquisitiveness in the old uncorrupted sense), his love of truth, his genuine piety, his moral reverence, his good sense, his fair-mindedness, his shrewd sagacity. Of his personal history not very much is known. He was a native of Halicarnassus, a Dorian colony in Asia Minor, Troezen, the city that gave generous shelter to Athenian fugitives before Salamis,¹ had a large part in its foundation. He was born in 484, six years after Marathon, four earlier than Salamis. After 454 Halicarnassus was a member of the Delian Confederacy, but till near that time was under the rule of a native dynasty owning allegiance to the king of Persia. Halicarnassus was 'freed' from its tyrants and from Persia while Herodotus was in his prime; and he is said to have taken active part in this emancipation, and his near kinsman, Panyasis, fell a martyr to the cause of liberty. But for some reason Herodotus did not care to remain a citizen of the city he had helped to free. He withdrew first to Samos. later he lived for a time at Athens. When the Athenians established a colony on the site of Sybaris, and called it Thurii, Herodotus joined this community, and is therefore sometimes spoken of as Herodotus the Thurian. But the most interesting and important side of Herodotus' life must have been his travels. The extent of these travels is difficult to determine exactly, but it must have been wide, we have his own word for them in certain cases.

His Travels.—Herodotus had certainly been in Egypt and made long stay there. Words of his that prove it are: "There is much besides that I learnt at Memphis from conversations with the priests. moreover I went on to Thebes and Heliopolis expressly to test whether what they said would agree with what I heard at Memphis" ² He had voyaged up the Nile as far as the first Cataract (Syenê, now Assuan). Tyre, again, he had certainly

¹ Vol I p 340

² Herodotus, II 3 1

visited . “desiring to know something certain of these matters so far as might be, I made a voyage to Tyre of Phoenicia ”¹ What he says in one place in his account of Babylon clearly implies that he had been there for in describing the ascent to the great eight-storeyed tower of Bel he says “about half-way up in this ascent there is a resting-place and seats , and here persons who make the ascent are wont to sit and rest ”² A man would not write in this way, unless he had undertaken the long climb and rested on the seats From these and other similar allusions it is conjectured with probability that Herodotus had journeyed into the interior of the Persian empire, and voyaged round the coasts of the Black Sea, as well as visited most parts of Greece, the islands, and Magna Graecia in Italy

The Charm of Herodotus.—Readers for not far short of two thousand years, from Lucian and Plutarch to the present day, have testified to the charm of Herodotus One chief secret of his charm is without doubt that he is a prince of story-tellers. “It is something,” says Dr Macan, “to have written the best story-book in Greek literature, perhaps in European literature ”³ His stories delight partly because he so evidently takes pleasure in telling them , he tells a story for the story’s sake, just because it is a good story In his less fanciful stories, several of which found place in Vol I, he shows a fine sense of literary form and dramatic point Not all his stories have a moral tendency, but his own outlook on life is deeply ethical and many of his stories, like the stories of Glaucus, of Cleobis and Biton, of Xerxes’ talks with Demaratus, have fine moral implications Others of his stories are not moral at all, and remind one of the Arabian Nights or Geoffrey of Monmouth. Such are the stories of Gyges, of Polycrates of Samos, of Democedes of Crotona, of Ramsinitus king of Egypt, of the Babylonian queen Nitocris, of the Conspiracy of the Seven. His manifest

¹ Herodotus, ii 44 1

² Herodotus, i 181 5

³ Macan, *Herodotus*, iv-vi p lxxiii.

pleasure in relating things strange and marvellous is another source of interest. That strange people the Egyptians were a perpetual joy to Herodotus. He loved to note how everything they did was done in the reverse way to other men. the Egyptians wrote from right to left, instead of from left to right, ~~they wore~~ by pushing the woof upwards instead of downwards like other men, other sea-faring races fasten ropes and stays outside their boats, the Egyptians inside, the Egyptian women go out and do the marketing instead of the men, the Egyptians let their hair grow long in token of mourning instead of cutting it short, and so on and so on and in illustrating this hasty generalization, he is as often wrong as right. He loves to make mention of ants, big as foxes and swifter than dromedaries, of gold-guarding griffins and one-eyed Arimaspians, of headless men with eyes in their breasts, and cattle that graze backwards,¹ but this is a different thing from saying that he believes in the existence of these marvels. With all his simplicity (and simplicity is part of his charm) Herodotus is shrewd. He is often sceptical of things told to him, sometimes when we are able to see that the things of which he doubted were true. He may be credited also with a sense of humour, some of his 'tall' stories are evidently narrated with a twinkle in his eye.

His Critical Sagacity.—In all his narrative and in all his description of marvels Herodotus holds ~~his~~ mind free, he questions, judges, selects. He is fully alive to the difference between hearsay evidence and the testimony of his own eyes and more than once emphasizes it. He by no means swallows all he is told on his travels (though he seems to swallow a good deal which we easily condemn as absurd) he just genially passes on what he was told for the entertainment of his audience. He is garrulous, if you like, but it is a happy garrulity for which we have cause to be thankful. Not infrequently he plainly expresses his own disbelief in a story or a marvel, or he gives

¹ Because, if, as they grazed, they moved forward, their horns would stick in the ground.

more versions than one and leaves his readers to use their judgment. This generous amplitude of method has had useful results for later enquirers, not in history only, but in allied sciences also. It has preserved much material which anthropologists, ethnologists, archaeologists, and other learned persons now turn to account. This material is not least valuable where Herodotus' own opinion has proved to be wrong. Thus in discussing the cause of the yearly overflowing of the Nile he definitely rejects the theory that the rising of the river is due to the melting of snow, and for this rejection he gives grounds which were quite reasonable at the time. But it has now been ascertained that this explanation is exactly true for one of the two great branches of the river, the White Nile which comes from the region of the great lakes¹. He disbelieves in the Tin Islands, which did exist if we understand the name to be a misnomer for Cornwall². The most interesting instance of his scepticism about a statement which we see to have been true has to do with the circumnavigation of Africa by Phoenician seamen in the days of Pharaoh-Necho, king of Egypt. The explorers started from a port in the Red Sea and proceeded southward along the African coast. "When autumn came on," the narrative continues, "they landed wherever they happened to be on the coast, sowed a crop and waited till it was ripe for cutting. Then they reaped it and set sail again, and two whole years passed in this way. In the third year they turned through the Pillars of Hercules and reached Egypt again. And they told a story,—*which I for my part do not believe*, though perhaps others may—that as they were sailing round Africa they had the sun on the right."³ This detail which Herodotus found incredible, proves to us that the voyage really took place as described; for, of course, when the ships rounded the Cape of Good Hope and began sailing west and northwest, the mariners would have seen the sun on their right at times when previously it had been on the left. It is

¹ Herodotus, iii. 20 and 22

² Herodotus, iii. 115

³ Herodotus, iv. 42

tempting to illustrate further Herodotus' habit of discursiveness and its interesting results Two examples must suffice One shall be his account of how another Egyptian king sought to ascertain which branch of the human race was the oldest "The Egyptians," he says, "before the reign of Psammetichus believed that they themselves were the oldest race of men But after Psammetichus became king and resolved to ascertain who really were oldest, they believed that the Phrygians were older and they themselves came next. The device which Psammetichus adopted, when he found himself baffled in the enquiry, was as follows He took two newly-born infants of the common people and gave them to a shepherd to rear along with his flock on the following plan , he enjoined on him to let no one utter a word of speech in their presence, but to keep them by themselves in a lonely steading, bringing goats to them at stated times to supply them with milk, and making proper provision in other respects The object of what Psammetichus did and the orders he gave was that he might learn what word the children would first utter apart from inarticulate cries. Two years went by in this way, when one day, as the shepherd opened the door and went in, both children stretched out their hands to him and said 'bekkos' The shepherd took no notice when he first heard this, but when as he came again and again to attend to them, they kept repeating the word, he informed the king and by his command brought the children into his presence And when Psammetichus himself heard it, he enquired what people have in their language a word 'bekkos,' and he learnt that the Phrygians have a word 'bekkos' meaning 'bread' Accordingly, on the ground of this test, the Egyptians agreed that the Phrygians were more ancient than themselves."¹ Such is Herodotus' story . a more common-sense explanation is that the children, having learnt to associate feeding-time with the bleating of goats, had taken to imitating those sounds when they felt hungry.

¹ Herodotus, ii. 2

The other story concerns the source of the Nile. Herodotus says that no one, Egyptian or Libyan or Greek, of whom he inquired pretended to know anything about it with certainty except a clerk of the Sacred Treasury at Sais. He goes on: "I did not, however, take the man seriously when he pretended to know exactly. But what he said was that there are two mountains with sharp-pointed peaks rising between the city of Syenê in the Thebaid and Elephantinê, and that the name of the one is Crô-phi, of the other Mô-phi. And he said that the springs of the Nile flow from between these two mountains and are of unfathomable depth, and that half of the water flows towards Egypt and the North, the other half towards Ethiopia and the South."¹ At first this story seems merely grotesque, but the modern Egyptologist recognizes real Egyptian words in Crôphi and Môphi. The Egyptian name of the Nile-god is Hâpi. Crôphi is probably a corruption of Qer-Hâpi, meaning 'Cavern of the Nile-god,' Môphi of Mu-Hâpi, 'Water of the Nile-god.'²

2 THUCYDIDES

Thucydides, son of Olorus, was a contemporary of Herodotus, though considerably younger, that is to say he was born when Herodotus was a boy of twelve. It hardly admits of doubt that he profited greatly by having Herodotus as a predecessor. His style and method are very different, and so is his theme, but he received from Herodotus a spacious conception of what history might be, and also, in a wide sense, the principle of research—that evidence must be sought for and diligently sifted. But he was writing of the events of his own day, and was therefore in a far better critical position than Herodotus. He had himself taken a part in the history he relates and had abundant opportunities of conversing with and questioning eyewitnesses.

¹ Herodotus, ii. 28

² See How and Wells, *Commentary on Herodotus*, vol. i, p. 172

His Critical Standpoint.—He has himself given the reasons which led him to his history and outlined the principles by which he was guided in writing it “Thucydides, the Athenian, has put together the history of the war between the Peloponnesians and Athenians. He began to write as soon as the war broke out, in the expectation that it would be a great struggle and more memorable than any previous war.”¹ These are his opening words. A few pages further on he explains his principles. “The events of the war I did not think good to describe, on the authority of any chance information, nor according to my own estimate of the probabilities, what I relate, I was either present at myself, or, in accepting the witness of others for it, I tested every detail with exactitude to the utmost of my ability. This proved a laborious method of procedure, because the eyewitnesses of events did not agree in their accounts, but varied them according to their partiality for one side or the other and the accident of what they happened to remember. It may well be that this absence of an element of fable will make my history less attractive, but if those who wish to gain a clear view of past events, and of the future in so far as in all human probability events shall recur or be similar, judge my work profitable, that will be enough for me. My history is written to be a possession for all time, not like a prize composition for the immediate pleasure of the ear.”² Later on when his narrative has been carried down to the Peace of Nicias and he is about to proceed to the story of the uneasy peace and the ultimate renewal of hostilities, he gives a fresh and somewhat expanded statement of his procedure. “This history also Thucydides the Athenian wrote in orderly succession, summer by summer and winter by winter, as things happened, to the time when the Lacedaemonians and their allies put an end to the dominion of the Athenians and captured the Long Walls and the Piraeus. And the years of war to this point were in all seven and twenty... I lived through the whole time myself, at a ripe age for under-

¹ Thucydides, 1. 1

² Thucydides, 1. 22 2-4.

standing, and I paid close attention to the course of events in order that I might be accurately informed. It happened, moreover, that I was an exile from my own country for twenty years after my employment in command at Amphipolis, and since I had access to information on both sides, and, in particular, about Peloponnesian affairs because of my banishment, was all the better able to watch events quietly.”¹ These passages suffice to show how at a leap Thucydides had arrived at a mature conception of the leading principles of sound work in history—the collection and testing of first-hand evidence. He does not specifically mention documentary evidence in the way a modern scientific historian would, and in his work he makes comparatively slight use of official records or state papers.² He may have had larger access to such sources than actually appears, but at any rate he does not refer to these sources of evidence as a modern writer would. Except for this difference he is as alive to the paramount importance of first-hand evidence and the comparative method as the most convinced historian of the documentary school.

Contrast with Herodotus.—In these respects there is obviously a strong contrast between Thucydides’ method of writing history and Herodotus’. In spite of his honesty of purpose and love of truth Herodotus has a far less steady hold on the principle that the truth of history depends on a comparison of first-hand evidence than has Thucydides. He forgets it in the sheer pleasure of story-telling. His history has quite rightly been called an epic or saga, a work of the poet’s art as much as the historian’s. But if his history gains in picturesque and romantic quality, it is less accurate history. In Thucydides the picturesque and dramatic aspects of history—though when the truth of history requires it he can soar to a pitch beyond Herodotus’ reach—are strictly subordinated to

¹ Thucydides, v 26 1 and 5

² Notable exceptions are the treaties quoted *verbatim* in Book V chapters 18, 23, 47, 77, 79; and an inscription on an altar dedicated at Delphi by the grandson of Pisistratus, quoted vi 54 7

accuracy Again the mental attitude of the two men towards the connection of events is markedly different Herodotus seems hardly able to conceive large public motives and wide national impulses He tends to envisage the links between great events through petty personal emotions and passions, which are indeed present and at work, but as the occasions of great events rather than the causes. Thus he can believe that the first impulse to the vast movement of forces which threatened to overwhelm Hellas in 481-479, was given through the reckless longing of a Greek physician, kept in gilded captivity at the Great King's court, to get back to his native city,¹ and Histiaeus is made to stir up the Ionian revolt from analogous motives² Thucydides with surer comprehension pays no attention whatever to the gossip about Pericles and Megara which we find in Aristophanes and in Plutarch He does indeed give due weight to what happened at Epidamnus and Potidaea, but points to the real cause of the Peloponnesian war as lying deeper, "the truest reason of all, though it has not often been plainly stated, was the growth of Athenian power and the alarm this inspired in the Lacedaemonians"³ In a word Thucydides has risen to a philosophical conception of history, based on a scientific knowledge of human nature and a just estimate of forces and motives Herodotus has not got beyond the feeling for history as story, sometimes even as fairy story

Philosophical History.—This it is which makes Thucydides so admirable an introduction to the serious study of history He is not only the supreme historian of the ancient world, he is a model for all time. It is well worth while to illustrate this side of his great work a little more freely This philosophic temper is nowhere more effectively shown than in his treatment of the moral aspect of political transactions Herodotus is preoccupied with his belief in immoral causation of the naive sort which sees in history a succession of special judgments. His mind

¹ Herodotus, iii 129-138

² Herodotus, v 35

³ Thucydides, i 23 6

is deeply tinged with these characteristically Hellenic conceptions—which also dominate Greek tragedy—of the divine jealousy—*Phthonos*—which will not tolerate for long great and unbroken human prosperity, and of the retribution—*Nemesis*—which sooner or later falls, when man's heart is lifted up with pride of power (*Hubris*), and he forgets the law of righteousness. There is nothing of this in Thucydides. He has been charged with a cynical indifference to the distinction of right and wrong in the conduct of states and public men, with treating all public actions merely as questions of conflicting interests and relative power. Certainly he shows pointedly how large a part interest plays in determining international politics, how little powerful states are swayed by consideration of justice, and even of honour and good faith. The actual treatment of the Plataeans by Sparta and of the people of Melos by Athens are glaring examples. Thucydides certainly is not, as Herodotus is, obsessed by the idea of divine retribution and for ever pointing morals. He never points a moral. And yet, like Shakespeare, he is a more powerful teacher of morality than consciously didactic writers. Silently, inexorably, he makes manifest the majesty of the moral law by the mere juxtaposition of events in their actual connection. We see the Spartans paying the penalty of their selfishness and stupidity in the humiliations of Pylos and Sphacteria. We see the evil harvest of unbridled class passions in the horrors of Corcyra. We see the arrogance of imperial Athens rising with success and throwing away opportunity after opportunity. The moral climax is reached in the simple narration of the crime of Melos,¹ followed immediately by the inception of the Sicilian madness. Men and nations work out their destinies in accordance with character and the right or wrong use of the opportunities which circumstances bring. It is true of the Greeks collectively in the fifth century B.C., and equally true of the Greeks and other peoples in the century in which we live. Nothing is more characteristic of Thucydides' method in this sphere of moral

¹ Thucydides, v. 116 and vi. 1

causation than his management of the episode known as the Melian Controversy¹ The Melians plead weakly as it seems, the old-fashioned ethical distinctions only to be scornfully argued out of countenance by the shameless avowal in the mouths of the Athenian envoys of the sole validity of self-interest and force So it may appear on the surface, but all the time to the intelligent reader the falsehood of the brilliant Athenian sophistry is patent, and the real invincibility of the more generous principles of action is demonstrated with greater force Right and wrong are felt not to depend upon argument, but on something deeper and more secure And at the end of the argument comes the Sicilian ruin²

The Speeches.—The use made by Thucydides of the speeches, which at certain important turning points in his narration are put into the mouths of leading actors, is one of the more effective resources of his art These 'speeches' are no mere ornamental excrescences any more than the choruses in the Aeschylean drama. They are a powerful means of representing graphically contending forces and principles, and in particular of bringing out national character The contrast of Athenians and Spartans is effectively displayed by what is said in dramatic form in the speeches, and not alone in the formal contrast put into the mouth of Corinthian speakers. Cleon and Diodotus in the Mytilenaean debate, throw side-lights on Athenian psychology, which make more intelligible the mistakes of the Peloponnesian war, and not that only but the difficulties with which the patriot Demosthenes had to contend in the next century "Your way is to look on at speeches like spectators at a show, and to provide an audience for things done, you form your judgment of proposals from the fine words of speakers who argue them feasible, while as for things done, you put no more trust in the accomplished fact that you have seen with your eyes,

¹ Thucydides, v. 85-113 And see above pp 180-1

² Thucydides shows also very clearly—when war was renewed in 413 after the abortive Peace of Nicias—how great was the moral effect on the Spartans of the conviction that *now* they were in the right (See Book vii ch 8)

than in what you are told, if the speaker has a fine turn for caustic rhetoric. You are clever at being deceived by the novelty of an argument, and at refusing to follow advice when it is founded on recognized principles, for you are at the mercy of every paradox and think scorn of the beaten track. Each of you wishes most of all to shine in debate himself, failing that to outrival those who do by not seeming behind them in quickness of wit, since he catches the point of a smart saying before the words are out of the speaker's mouth. In a word you are slaves to the pleasures of the ear and are more like spectators at an exhibition of sophists than men who take part in the deliberations of a state "¹" And those are the Athenians of whom Pericles had said "we have compelled every sea and every land to give access to our daring!" The words quoted are put into the mouth of Cleon, but the thought is Thucydides', and the full significance is not seen till we follow the fortunes of Athens through the next century.

Spartan character and policy are similarly better understood for the defence against the strictures of the Corinthians spoken by Archidamus "And as for this slowness and deliberation with which they reproach us so much, do not you be ashamed of it. Haste at the outset may make delay in coming to an end, if you enter upon war insufficiently prepared, and the city which is ours to dwell in has ever been free and of highest renown. This quality in us may well be held to be wise self-control at any rate by reason of it we alone among the nations do not wax arrogant through good fortune, and in ill fortune we give ground less than others. It is even by reason of our orderly spirit that we excel in war and counsel: in war, because sense of honour is largely made up of self-control, and courage is largely made up of sense of honour, in counsel because our training is too plain to allow us to despise the laws, our discipline too hard to permit us to disobey them" "²" We understand the better for this study of Spartan character, why the Spartans were

¹ Thucydides, m 38, 4-7

² Thucydides, i. 84 1-3.

lenient to defeated Athens, and why, when Sparta was humbled in her turn, the Spartans went down fighting. It was numbers that failed her men, not the spirit of their discipline.

Thucydides' political opinions.—There is nothing greater in Thucydides than the completeness with which he keeps his personal grievance out of his history. He records the saving of Eion, the loss of Amphipolis, and his twenty years of exile, but his only further reference to his banishment is to point it out as a circumstance which favoured the writing of his history. Whatever more he felt he kept to himself. There is no trace of vindictive feeling against Athens, only a just appraisement of her great glory, of her people's errors, and the causes of her defeat. As for Athenian politics, if he had any political bias, he keeps it sedulously within bounds. We may reasonably infer that his own position was that of steady loyalty to Athenian democracy with a leaning towards some limitation of democratic license, for he expresses the opinion that the qualified democracy established after the overthrow of the Four Hundred was the best government Athens had in his time.¹ He clearly disapproves of the popular leaders who came to the front during the Peloponnesian war, yet he appears to have loyally accepted the democracy as completed by Pericles, and his admiration for Pericles himself was whole-hearted. Some think he is unfair to Cleon. That he disliked Cleon is plain enough, and dislike doubtless colours his portrait of the demagogue, but his portrait, true or untrue, agrees with that painted by Aristophanes. His account of the revolution of 411 is quite dispassionate and betrays no sign of sympathy with the oligarchical conspirators. In the class war which led to massacres at Samos and Megara, and the horrors at Corcyra which he describes so vividly, he doubtless sympathized with the victims, but the judgment tacitly expressed is condemnation of civil discord and of the violent passions which had effects so hideous.

¹ Thucydides, viii 97 5

Descriptive power.—Some of the best descriptive passages in Thucydides have already been cited in the first part of this volume, the Theban attack on Plataea, the sea-fights in the Gulf of Corinth, the race to save the Mytilenaeans, the defence of Pylos, the capture of Sphacteria, the death of Cleon, the sailing of the fleet for Sicily, the night attack on Epipolae¹, the last fight in the harbour of Syracuse, and, above all, the retreat of the Athenians. These passages, and others like them, show Thucydides, in spite of his restraint and refusal of meretricious arts, a greater master of narrative than even Herodotus. There is nothing greater in all prose literature than the best descriptive passages in Thucydides. Nor is his sense of dramatic action and situation less powerful. Individual character in action he is less successful in drawing, but he has left us two character sketches, perfect in their kind, the 'characters' of Themistocles and Pericles. His best character shown in action is Nicias, after that come Brasidas and Alcibiades. But such portraiture is not Thucydides' characteristic excellence. He excels rather in generalization and reflection. A good instance of his extraordinary power in this is his description of the demoralization among the people of Athens caused by plague¹. Even more impressive are his comments following a recital of the atrocious deeds done at Corcyra, on the savagery which affected all Hellas as the disastrous war, with its combination of racial, social, and political antagonisms, ran its course, "To such extremes of cruelty did the revolution go, and this seemed to be the worst of revolutions, because it was the first. For not long afterwards the whole Hellenic world was in commotion, in every city the chiefs of the democracy and of the oligarchy were struggling, the one to bring in the Athenians, the other the Lacedaemonians. Now in time of peace, men would have had no excuse for introducing either, and no desire to do so, but when they were at war and both sides could easily obtain allies to the hurt of their enemies and the advantage of themselves, the dissatisfied party

¹ Thucydides, ii. 53

were only too ready to invoke foreign aid. And revolution brought upon the cities of Hellas many terrible calamities, such as have been and always will be while human nature remains the same, but which are more or less aggravated and differ in character with every new combination of circumstances. In peace and prosperity both states and individuals are actuated by higher motives, because they do not fall under the dominion of imperious necessities, but war, which takes away the comfortable provision of daily life, is a hard master, and tends to assimilate men's characters to their conditions.”¹ There is much more, but the whole is too long to quote. It serves to illustrate, as much else in Thucydides does, the truth of Dr Arnold's words in concluding the preface to the last three books of his edition “the history of Greece and Rome is not an idle enquiry about remote ages and forgotten institutions, but a living picture of things present, fitted not so much for the curiosity of scholars, as for the instruction of the statesman and the citizen”

3 XENOPHON

Xenophon, son of Gryllus, is by no means the peer of Thucydides and Herodotus in the writing of history, but his versatility as a man of letters gives him importance of another kind, and personally he is more interesting than either at all events we know more about him. Besides being a man of letters and a thinker, he was a sportsman and a country gentleman (Xenophon would have been happy as an English squire in a fox-hunting county), and he had proved himself in circumstances of peculiar difficulty a capable leader of men. He was born about the time of the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, in 431 or a little earlier, his mature life was varied and adventurous. In his youth he came under the personal influence of Socrates how deep and lasting the impression was his *Memorabilia* show. What part Xenophon took in the public life of Athens during the last years of the war and

¹ Thucydides, iii 82, Jowett, 1 pp 221-2 See also chs 83 and 84

the period of acute civil strife which followed is not known, but after the overthrow of the Thirty and a little before the trial and death of Socrates he left Athens on the great adventure of his life. At the invitation of his friend Proxenus, a Boeotian soldier of fortune in the service of Cyrus, the younger brother of the Persian king, he went out to Sardis, and as a guest and personal friend of the Prince, not a paid soldier, he accompanied the march into the interior of the Persian empire, which ended in the death of Cyrus and the retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks. In 399 he was back among the Greek cities of Asia Minor after two years of crowded experience. He had made the march through Asia Minor and from Syria to the Euphrates (in part now the air route from Irak), he had been present at Cunaxa (on the Euphrates, but not far distant from Baghdad). Then when the Greek commanders were treacherously seized at a friendly conference and put to death, and the Greek troops, the Hellenes as Xenophon always calls them, were sunk in despondency, the young Athenian came forward and by his sensible suggestions roused their drooping spirits to fresh confidence. The Retreat of the Ten Thousand Greeks from the neighbourhood of Baghdad on the Tigris, through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan and Armenia to Trapezus (Trebizond) on the Black Sea, is one of the great military feats of history. It had momentous consequences, for it was this which made fully manifest to the Greeks the weakness of the Persian empire, and so led directly to the conquests of Alexander the Great. There is no reason to doubt that Xenophon played a foremost part in leading the retreat. Called in this unexpected way to responsible command he displayed surprising capacity, and it was largely owing to his cheerfulness and tact, his military resourcefulness and presence of mind, that the Ten Thousand held together and won through. Isolated as they were in the middle of Mesopotamia, in the midst of a teeming population, with the King's armies all round them and great rivers and mountain chains barring their retreat, it seemed impossible to fight their way to safety,

until the thing was done Xenophon himself wrote the story in the book called the *Anabasis*, which is one of the great realistic and personal adventure books, like Robinson Crusoe and Scott's Antarctic Expedition. Xenophon came out of the adventure with a name famous throughout all Hellas, but this reputation cost him dear, inasmuch as his banishment from Athens was decreed because of it. That he had been a friend to Cyrus, the friend of Lysander and the Spartans, was crime enough. For some years more he remained in Asia Minor, following the campaigns of successive Spartan commanders, and especially the campaigns of King Agesilaus with whom he formed a close friendship. His two sons, Gryllus and Diodorus must have been born in these years. For some years after this (399-387) he lived at Sparta and his sons were educated in the Spartan discipline. In 387 he was settled by the Spartan government in an estate at Scillus in Elis, not far from Olympia. He describes this in the *Anabasis*¹—and how, with a portion of his prize-money from Asia, he bought a plot of ground there and built a shrine and an altar to Artemis, his patron deity. “The place lies on the direct road from Lacedaemon to Olympia,” he writes, “about twenty furlongs from the temple of Zeus, and within the sacred enclosure there is meadow-land and wood-covered hills, suited to the breeding of pigs and goats and cattle and horses, so that even the pack animals of the pilgrims passing to the feast fare sumptuously. The shrine is girdled by a grove of cultivated trees, yielding dessert fruits in their season.”² Every year Xenophon paid tithe of the produce of the land to the goddess and celebrated a festival in which “all the citizens and neighbours, men and women, shared.” “The goddess,” he adds, “herself provided for the banqueters meat and loaves and wine and sweetmeats, with portions of the victims sacrificed from the sacred pasture, as also of those which were slain in the chase, for Xenophon's own lads, with the lads of the other citizens, always made a hunting excursion against

¹ Xenophon, *Anabasis*, v 3 7-13, Dakyns, 1 p 218-220

² *Anabasis*, v 3 11-12, Dakyns, p 219.

the festival day, in which any grown men who liked might join "¹" Here he lived happily for sixteen years in the enjoyment of everything his heart desired—dogs and horses and country pursuits and the means of showing hospitality to his friends, above all, with leisure to think and write amid beautiful scenery. There he farmed and reared stock and kept a pack of harriers, and a great part of his literary work was done. But in 371 came the defeat of the Spartans at Leuctra and after it the Spartan strength no longer availed to overawe the Eleans. Armed force broke in upon Xenophon's peace, and he and his had to flee. For the rest of his life Xenophon lived at Corinth, there he completed his *Hellenica* and there he worked on with his pen till he died. But soon after Leuctra Athens, in the whirligig of Greek politics, made alliance with Sparta (for now Thebes was the more formidable). Xenophon's sentence of banishment was revoked, and he and his sons once more became citizens of Athens. His sons, who inherited their father's good looks and manly tastes and love of horsemanship, served, as became their knightly rank, in the Athenian cavalry. In 362 they fought in this capacity at the battle of Mantinea, and the elder, Gryllus, was among those who fell. Diogenes Laertius has passed on to us the story that, when the grievous news was brought to Xenophon, he was engaged in offering sacrifice and wearing a sacred wreath, or chaplet. "Your son has fallen" said the messenger, and the father's hand removed the festal wreath. But when the messenger added "nobly," Xenophon replaced the wreath upon his head.

Xenophon on Horsemanship and Hunting.—We have had occasion already to make use of some of Xenophon's writings, those which were inspired by his admiration for Socrates. His other literary works are many and varied, including subjects as widely removed as a long oriental romance and a discourse on the Athenian 'budget', it would serve no useful purpose to run through the whole list. But peculiar interest attaches to two treatises, the

¹ *Anabasis*, v 3 9-10, Dakyns, p 219

one about field sports and the other about riding, which have come down bearing his name and bring him very near us. They bring him near, because what he says shows more fellowship between the ideas on these subjects of an Athenian of the fourth century B.C. and those of our day than perhaps we quite realized.

As an account of field sports among the Greeks, this treatise of Xenophon's on hunting is fairly comprehensive. It treats of beagling, of deer-hunting, of boar-hunting, of the pursuit of big game, it treats of nets and net-keepers, and the sportsman's equipment generally. Above all it contains the whole art and mystery of chasing the hare. This, it is evident, is Xenophon's own favourite recreation, pursuing the hare with harriers. "So winsome a creature is it, that to note the whole of the proceedings from the start—the quest by scent, the find, the pack in pursuit, full cry and the final capture—a man might well forget all other loves" ¹. There are sections on the points of the harrier, on the keeping of a pack, on the naming of hounds, on breeding and training, and an especially long and loving section on the hare and her ways. Xenophon writes like a nature lover and a lover of animals. Young leverets are on no account to be chased. "Of course a good sportsman will let these very young things alone" ². This sport of catching hares takes up the largest space in Xenophon's manual, but as already implied there are chapters also on hunting deer, on boar-hunting, and a short one on the pursuit of big game—lions, leopards, panthers and bears, but for these last the sportsman must go outside Greece. Boar-hunting has the excitement of danger added. Xenophon testifies to the strength and fierceness of the wild pig, especially in defence of its offspring. Facing the boar on foot, boar-spear in hand, was a riskier game even than pig-sticking in India. Our author gives careful directions to the hunter how to bear himself in such a close encounter—he is to grasp his spear

¹ *Cynegeticus*, v 33, Dakyns, m 2 p 93

² *Cynegeticus*, v 14. It is disappointing after this to find Xenophon has no similar scruples about molesting the young of the deer.

firmly "with the left hand forward and with the right behind, the left is to steady it, and the right to give it impulse, and so the feet, the left advanced in correspondence with the left arm, and right with right. As he advances, he will make a lunge forward with the boar-spear, planting his legs apart not much wider than in wrestling, and keeping his left side turned towards his left hand, and then, with his eye fixed steadily on the beast's eye, he will note every turn and movement of the creature's head. As he brings down the boar-spear to the thrust, he must take good heed the animal does not knock it out of his hands by a side movement of the head, for if so he will follow up the impulse of that rude knock. If this misfortune happens, the huntsman must throw himself upon his face and clutch tight hold of the brushwood under him, since if the wild boar should attack him in that posture, owing to the upward curve of its tusks, it cannot get under him; whereas if caught erect, he must be wounded. What will happen then is, that the beast will try to raise him, and failing that will stand upon and trample him."¹ And then the only chance for him is the opportune intervention of another hunter, who may draw off the boar's attack. In Xenophon's code of sportsmanship there is a larger use of nets and pits and calthrops than is permitted now. On the other hand there are many considerate and judicious precepts about the care and training of dogs, for instance that the owner should make a point of always feeding the hounds with his own hand, and of not taking a hound out when it has refused its food.

Xenophon's treatise on the horse and horsemanship will delight the horse-lover even more for its sympathetic and practical understanding of horse nature, it is not easy to find a literary parallel in these respects. Xenophon bases all his hints and precepts about the treatment of horses on the principle of association. whatever you want a horse to do for you, study to connect the doing with some gratification or relief, and his cardinal maxim is

¹ *Cynegeticus*, x. 11-13, Dakyns, pp. 113-4

“ Never approach a horse in anger ”¹ He gives elaborate hints for guidance in buying a horse. Before everything else he insists on the importance of sound hoofs, and remembering that the Greeks did not shoe their horses, we acknowledge he is right. For the same reason he urges special precautions against a damp stable-floor and recommends a stable-yaid flagged with cobble-stones. The stable itself should be near the house so as to be under the master’s eye and he may be sure his horse is really getting its corn. There are useful hints for acquiring a good seat and about the training of horses for cavalry work, which must include “ leaping ditches, scrambling over walls, scaling up and springing off high banks ”² But Xenophon looks on the horse not only as a useful servant and valuable ally in war, but also as a beautiful natural object, and his treatise includes precepts for enhancing the natural grace of the horse and bringing out his fire and spirit for ceremonial purposes. His principle is still the same, kindness, the understanding of the horse’s psychology, and always his golden rule: “ and so throughout, as we never cease repeating, at every response to your wishes, whenever and wherever the animal performs his service well, reward and humour him. Thus when the rider perceives that the horse takes pleasure in the high arching and supple play of his neck, let him seize the instant, not to impose severe exertion on him like a taskmaster, but rather to caress and coax him, as if anxious to give him a rest ”³ “ What we need is that the horse should of his own accord exhibit his finest

¹ V1 13, Dakyns, p 52. Particularly excellent are his remarks on what may be done before the process of ‘ breaking in ’ is begun to make a colt ‘ gentle, tractable and affectionate ’ “ That is a condition of things which for the most part may be brought about at home by the groom—if he knows how to let the animal connect hunger and thirst and the annoyance of flies with solitude, whilst associating food and drink and escape from sources of irritation with the presence of man. As the result of this treatment the young horse will acquire—not fondness merely—but an absolute craving for human beings ” *On Horsemanship*, ii 3, Dakyns, p 43

² *On Horsemanship*, iii 7 and viii 1, Dakyns, pp 45 and 56

³ *On Horsemanship*, ix, Dakyns, p 59

airs and paces at set signals Supposing, when he is in the riding-field, you push him to a gallop, until he is bathed in sweat, and when he begins to prance and show his airs to fine effect, you promptly dismount and take off the bit, you may rely upon it he will of his own accord another time break into the same prancing action Such are the horses on which gods and heroes ride, as represented by the artist The majesty of men themselves is best discovered in the graceful handling of such animals A horse so prancing is indeed a thing of beauty, a wonder and a marvel, riveting the gaze of all who see him, young alike and greybeards”¹ We think of the Parthenon frieze, and a new aspect of the secret of Pheidian art is revealed to us

Xenophon's Hellenic History.—But it is after all with Xenophon as a writer of history that we have to do here, and it cannot be claimed that the *Hellenica* have anything like the same interest and importance as Herodotus' history of the great Persian War, or Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian war To begin with Xenophon is less fortunate in his subject There is a splendid artistic unity in the story of Xerxes' invasion and its repulse and there is unity in the story of the struggle for mastery between Athens and Sparta Xenophon's Hellenic history covers a range of fifty years within his own lifetime, but there is no connecting unity other than continuity in time Two books of the *Hellenica* are the completion of the design which Thucydides left unfinished, comprising the last seven years of the Peloponnesian War, from the battle of Cynossema in 411 B C to the capitulation of Athens in 404, the other five are a medley of disjointed episodes and personal experiences There is no central interest in the *Hellenica*, it is not in a true sense a single work, though from Lysander's triumphant entry into Piraeus and the pulling down of the Long Walls Xenophon goes straight on to the history of the Thirty Tyrants and thence to the doings of the Lacedaemonians in Asia Minor In so far as there is no deliberate break

¹ XI 6-9, Dakyns, pp 65-6

and new beginning the work is continuous and one. But the conclusion of scholars who have carefully studied the internal evidence is that it really falls into three divisions written at wide intervals of time.¹ If we consider how the history of a man's own times must ordinarily be written, this conclusion is seen to be what might have been expected beforehand. The whole length of time is considerable, just half a century. the treatment varies greatly in scale, it is full and detailed of affairs which came under Xenophon's own observation, brief and defective about other events not less important. Some matters of great interest are omitted altogether: for instance there is no account whatever of the formation of the second Athenian confederacy, and, stranger still, not a word of the foundation of Messenê and Megalopolis.² The nearest approach we have to unity of subject in the *Hellenica* is the struggle between Sparta and Thebes. Thebes wronged by Sparta gathered strength and under the inspiration of two great leaders, Pelopidas and Epaminondas, overthrew the Spartan power at Leuctra (in 371) and again at Mantinea (in 362). Here Xenophon had a great opportunity of which he fails to take full advantage. His strong Laconian sympathies blind him to the heroism which Thebes, whose part in the Persian wars had been an ignoble one, rose to at this time. If we had only the *Hellenica*, we should know nothing of the chivalrous spirit of Pelopidas and have but a poor measure of the real greatness of Epaminondas. Taken as a whole, however, the history of Hellas after 404 is insignificant history, that is to say, it deals with events which affect after history very little, except in so far as the frittering away of the strength of the city states by incessant divisions and conflicts—Argos against Sparta, Thebes against Athens, Athens against Sparta, Sparta

¹ See Dakyns, vol. 1 p. lx, or Loeb *Hellenica*, p. viii.

² The return of the Messenians to the Peloponnesus after 300 years of exile is one of the most curious of Time's revenges in all history, only to be paralleled, perhaps, by the restoration of dismembered Poland in our own time.

and Athens against Thebes, old border feuds of Thebans, Phocians and Locrians, of Arcadians and Lacedaemonians—paved the way to the rise of Macedonia

Xenophon's reflections on Mantinea,—almost the concluding words of the *Hellenica*—are a telling commentary on the futility of it all “The result of these events turned out the very opposite of what all men had expected. When nearly the whole of Hellas had gathered together and set in array against each other, there was no one who did not believe, that if there were a battle, the conquerors would rule, and the conquered would be their subjects. But God so brought it to pass that while both sides set up a trophy as having been victorious, and neither tried to hinder the other in doing this, and while both gave back the enemy's dead under a truce as though they were victorious, yet both received back their dead under a truce as if defeated. While both claimed the victory, neither was found to have any advantage either in territory or state or sway other than they had before the battle was fought, but there was more confusion and disorder in Greece after the battle than before.”

Qualities of Xenophon as an Historian.—Xenophon has little of Herodotus' gift for story-telling or the tense descriptive power of Thucydides. The difference is seen if we compare Xenophon's account of Arginusae with Phormio's sea-fights, or Aegospotami with the last fight in the harbour of Syracuse. Xenophon's narrative rises in these places to a moderate vividness, but it has nothing of the “thrill which Thucydides at his best communicates.” Xenophon's merits are that he has a good clear style, not lacking in vigour, and transparent honesty of purpose, and that he is accurate according to his lights. He lets fall sensible observations at times, but he has not Thucydides' breadth of philosophical vision. His history without being great literature is eminently readable, and to have written a clear first-hand account of these fifty years is a valuable service to Calliopê. Nor are there wanting passages which derive a special interest, and even beauty, from the engaging personal qualities of the writer.

Xenophon's affection for Sparta gives him a pathetic eloquence when he has to tell of the evil days that came to her after Leuctra. In the year after that fatal reverse to the Spartan arms a great army under Epaminondas, said to have numbered 70,000 men, Boeotians, Phocians, Thessalians, Euboeans, Locrians, Acharnians, marched into the Peloponnese and invaded Laconia. Down from the slopes of Parnon they marched through the district of Sellasia till they came to the Eurotas, ravaging as they went. There was a bridge, to cross which was to be in Sparta, but the invaders did not venture on the attempt "for they caught sight of the heavy infantry in the temple of Alea ready to meet them" So formidable even in defeat was Spartan valour. And then comes Xenophon's unforgettable picture "So keeping the Eurotas on their right, they tramped along, burning and pillaging homesteads stocked with numerous stores. The feelings of the citizens may be well imagined. The women who had never set eyes upon a foe could scarcely contain themselves as they beheld the cloud of smoke. The Spartan warriors, inhabiting a city without fortifications, posted at intervals here one and there another, were in truth what they appeared to be, the veriest handful. And these kept watch and ward."¹ This description shows the strength of Xenophon's feelings, admiration and gratitude make Sparta's humiliation a personal calamity and who shall blame him? To this chivalrous sensibility is due another of the gems of the *Hellenica*, perhaps the purest gem of all—his tribute to Phlius. Phlius was but a little city, an Achaean city, neighbour to Sicyon and Corinth, and faithful ally of Sparta. This little city Xenophon singles out for a special tribute of praise (had not Gryllus and Diodorus charged with the horsemen of Phlius?) for gallant bravery and the staunch loyalty of its citizens, a tribute which extends over several pages of Book VII.² And the reason he gives for so doing is a pleasing one: he says "It is the way of historians, I know, to record only the noble achievements of the great cities, but to me it seems

¹ Xen. *Hell.* vi 5 27 and 28, Dakyns, u p 178

a still more worthy task to bring to light the great exploits of even a little state found faithful in the performance of fair deeds ”¹ We may acquiesce, in the judgment and lay to heart the lesson The civilization of Hellas, the customs and laws and institutions, the mental endowment of the Hellenes, the accomplishments and artistic gifts, were not a monopoly of the bigger states, of Athens and Argos, Sparta and Thebes, but were shared in greater or less degree by every city, great and small, which had a right to the Hellenic name The small states had, everyone of them, their particular constitutions (did not Aristotle describe 158²), their military systems, their games, their temples, their art treasures It is these scores of little autonomous states which collectively are Hellas and Hellas is greater than Sparta or Thebes, greater than Athens herself The Hellenes were learning this lesson slowly and painfully in the fifth and fourth centuries, too late and too imperfectly for their national salvation, not too late for the completion of the great inheritance they were to hand on to Rome and to the modern world

¹ Xenophon, *Hellenica*, vii 2 1

CHAPTER XIII

ATHENIAN ORATORY AND DEMOSTHENES

“Defeated undoubtedly the Athenians were, but they had become themselves once more, if only for a moment”

PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, *Demosthenes*, pp 389-90

“For every one of them felt that he had come into being, not for his father and his mother alone, but also for his country. And wherein lies the difference? He who thinks he was born for his parents alone awaits the death which destiny assigns him in the course of nature but he who was born for his country also will be willing to die, that he may not see her in bondage, and will look upon the outrages and the indignities that he must needs bear in a city that is in bondage as more to be dreaded than death”

DEMOSTHENES, *On the Crown*, 205

Speeches as Literature.—Of all forms of literature oratory is the least truly literary. A speech, as such, is addressed to the ears of listening men. Drama, also, is speech and action before it is literature, but drama, being imaginative creation, readily becomes an affair of the study, the product of leisure and meditation. A speech in its very nature has to do with realities and fits a particular occasion—it may be premeditated, but it must be spoken. Oratory, however, has come to be accepted as a form of literature, great speeches have been written down and preserved, some of the most famous ‘speeches’ were never spoken at all, like Cicero’s Verrine orations¹ and Demosthenes’ indictment of Meidias. There are extant literary speeches which were never even intended to be spoken, and these cease in any true sense to be

¹ Except the first

speeches, they become a kind of drama. The Greeks were the first people who deliberately made speaking a fine art, and called it *rhetoric*. Rhetoric played a great part, we might say too great a part, in the history of Athens during the fourth century B.C.

Rhetoric.—Oratory, as studied compositions intended to be written down and preserved, does not come into Athenian history till the great days of Athens are over. Thucydides does indeed illuminate his history with speeches which bring out the content of a situation at critical moments, and greatest among these are three attributed to Pericles, but all are so Thucydidean in form that it is impossible to estimate with any probability how much of the speaker's actual words they preserve for us. The historian's own account of them is that they convey the substance of what was said. Public speaking was, however, in a sense, an art among the Hellenes from the earliest times. The Boulé and the Agora were primitive institutions among them. There are speeches, eloquent and effective speeches, made in Council and Assembly both in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.¹ Naturally in democracies the part played by public speaking was greater than under kingly or oligarchical government. At Athens, the complete democracy, there were two forms of public speaking which assume a growing importance through the period best known to history—political speeches in the Ecclesia, forensic speeches in the Dicastery Courts. No man could aspire to a political career at Athens without possessing a capacity for speaking in public. Any citizen might at some time find himself summoned before one of these courts, and then his fortune, perhaps even his life, depended on his ability to plead in his own cause. For at Athens, in spite of the prominence of the democratic law-courts, there were no professional advocates. There was a prejudice against the very notion of them. Every citizen must plead in his

¹ "With the Greeks oratory was instinctive, in the earliest semi-historical records that we possess, eloquence is found to be a gift prized not less highly than valour in battle" Dobson, *The Greek Orators*, p. 1

own case, whether as complainant or defendant¹ It therefore became a matter of great practical importance that everyone born to a good social position should be able to marshal an argument and speak in public without timidity or confusion The same happened in other democracies It is not wonderful if a class of persons appeared who claimed to be able to train others to speak. The sophists put this forward among their pretensions. It was at other places than Athens, that such teachers first attained fame. Protagoras was, we have seen, of Abdera ; Prodicus was of Ceos , Gorgias, most famous of them all, of Leontini Later than the sophists came the ' speakers', from whose Greek name, *rhetor*, we get our words *rhetoric* and *rhetorical* Rhetoric, more especially the art of persuasion in the law courts, was cultivated at Athens with remarkable elaboration and subtlety² The ' speakers,' known distinctively by this title, appear in a later age than that of Cimon and Pericles . the first who were so called, Antiphon and Andocides, belong to the time of the Peloponnesian war Ultimately ten chief masters of Attic oratory came to be distinguished, but the list is not quite authoritative³ The greatest of the ten all belong to the fourth century, which for Athens may be called the age of the rhetoricians It is significant of the decline of Athenian public life after Aegospotami No one thought of calling Cimon or Pericles, Themistocles or Aristides, a *rhetor* The statesmen of Demosthenes' time are called as a matter of course rhetors, public speakers : public

¹ The statement that no professional advocacy was permitted in Athenian law courts needs qualification in two ways By the fourth century, and possibly a good deal earlier, it was a recognized custom that parties to a suit in an Athenian court should have speeches written for them and should deliver these as their own , and in this way a class of speech-writers grew up which by Demosthenes' time may be regarded as a profession In the fourth century, also, personal friends were allowed to appear in court and plead for either of the parties (a non-professional form of advocacy), and it was in this capacity that Demosthenes composed and spoke the most famous of all his speeches, the speech *On the Crown*

² See Plato, *Phaedrus*, 266 d-267 d

³ Antiphon, Andocides, Lysias, Isaeus, Isocrates, Aeschines, Demosthenes, Hypereides, Lycurgus and Dinarchus

speaker has come to mean statesman. With some truth rhetoric may be called the vice of the age. We shall see presently how rhetoric infected the drama. Rhetoric acquired, and still retains, a slightly sinister meaning.¹ We praise a speaker for his eloquence, his earnestness, his honesty, but not for his 'rhetoric'. Rhetoric came to connote the bad side of speech-making, the meretricious and dishonest. The reason is that in the Athenian dicastery-courts, with their hundreds of judges, and in the Ecclesia also, the qualities and accomplishments which brought success were not the best. A barrister in modern England, similarly, aims at winning his case, not at considering first and last the attainment of justice, and in Parliament and at public meetings politicians are usually more concerned with justifying their party or themselves than with impartial reasoning and true conclusions. At Athens both in the Ecclesia and the law-courts, the conditions were such as to favour the lower rather than the higher arts of speech. The judges in the law-courts were a mixed crowd of from 200 to 2000 ordinary citizens, of intelligence probably rather below than above the average. Appeal to their pride, to their prejudices, to their liking to be amused and to be flattered, was the readiest way to success with them. In the Ecclesia, numbers were greater still; it was a mass meeting of citizens, and there, too, argument to be successful must suit the mercurial temperament of the Athenians.² Rhetoric, the tricky art of the clever speaker, got a bad name and has kept it since. Nevertheless, in spite of these baser tendencies, public speaking attained a noble excellence at Athens, and the greatest of the Attic orators deserve the fame that attaches to their names. Athenian prose writing in the hands of these 'orators' comes near to rivalling the prose of Plato. There are critics who place the masterpieces

¹ No one has ever exposed the weak side of *rhetoric* more effectively than Plato in the *Gorgias* and the *Phaedrus*. In the *Gorgias* (463 A and B) Socrates is made to describe rhetoric as one of four branches of an art of flattery.

² See Cleon's description in Thucydides, iii 38

of Lysias, Isocrates and Demosthenes even higher. We have materials for judgment since a considerable body of oratorical writing has come down to us, though this is only a small part of the whole literature of Greek oratory which once existed¹

Value for History.—But higher even than the value of the Greek orators for literature is their value for the vividness with which they light up the last phase of ancient Hellenic liberty, the years during which the Hellenic city-states were offering without common plan or foresight, hesitating and fitful resistance to the rapidly growing military power of the kings of Macedonia. Here once again in the history of Greece we have a drama of absorbing human interest. It was not only the impact of a strong and coherent military monarchy upon the several disunited Hellenic city-states, never more than partially confederated for temporary ends, and intermittently at war among themselves, but it was also a clash of ideals. Athens and the cities which resisted Philip of Macedon, stood for the ideas of political and personal freedom, which had inspired the Hellenes throughout their previous history, and especially in their struggle with Persia. Philip and Alexander, and their supporters in the several Greek states, stood also for an idea, the ideal of a Hellas welded together for the purpose of overthrowing their hereditary enemy, the Persian Empire. The complete expression of that ideal was the life-work of one of our orators, Isocrates. The protagonist on the other side, the inflexible champion of that vivid political freedom which had inspired and sustained the Hellenes in all their achievements, spiritual and material, was Demosthenes, the greatest orator of them all.

Fourth Century Hellas.—Fourth century Hellas, the Greek world in which Isocrates thought and Demosthenes strove, triumphed, and suffered defeat, was very different from fifth century Hellas. At the beginning of the century Athens was stripped of empire, and the Spartans

¹ Some 600 speeches in all, out of which, in round numbers, 150 survive

were everywhere dominant. But it was not long before the Spartans had demonstrated their own unfitness for 'empire'. As liberators of the Hellenes, they had lowered the pride of Athens. It was now proved that the *harmosts*, that is, the governors set in authority by Lysander and the Spartans, were harsher and more arbitrary in their methods than ever Athens had been.¹ This produced so much discontent that, ten years after the surrender of Athens, the Athenians, in alliance with their once bitter enemies the Corinthians, were fighting against the Spartans in Corinthian territory. In the same year, 394, Conon, the one Athenian admiral who carried his ships safely out of the ruin of Aegospotami, defeated a Spartan fleet off Cnidus, in command of Persian naval forces. In 378 a second Delian Confederacy came into existence with Athens at its head. But, meantime, the power of Thebes had grown, and it is Thebes, not Athens, which challenges Spartan supremacy. In 371 the battle of Leuctra definitely transferred the leadership in Hellas from Sparta to Thebes. This decision was confirmed in B.C. 362 by the battle of Mantinea, in which the Spartans were defeated, though Epaminondas, the Theban, who won Thebes her victories, fell. Sparta never recovered her old position, but more and more declined. The hegemony of Thebes also ended with the death of Epaminondas, and then there was no leadership in Greece at all, but only confused rivalry and purposeless conflict.² In 359, Philip, brother of Perdiccas III, became king of Macedonia and a new factor of quite different character came into the sphere of Hellenic politics, which was to revolutionize Europe and great part of Asia.

Philip of Macedon.—Macedonia has once or twice come into Hellenic history as we have followed the main

¹ No better defence of the Athenian 'archê' has ever been made than Isocrates', when he claims (*Panegyric*, 106), that during the seventy years it lasted the subject states lived "safe from tyranny, free from molestation by the barbarians, untroubled by faction in their own land, and at peace with all mankind".

² See Xenophon, *Hellenica*, vii 5 26.

course of events through the fifth century B C One Macedonian king made submission to Darius' generals on the first advance of the Persians into Europe¹, another claimed credit for bringing a friendly message to Pausanias before the battle of Plataea² At the beginning of the Peloponnesian war, the reigning king, Perdiccas, appears as the enemy of Athens before the revolt of Potidaea , and later as the ally of Brasidas (above, pp 125 and 170) Up to 359, however, the Macedonians had been only of quite secondary importance, whether as friends or enemies.³ But Philip was a man of uncommon energy of will and intelligence, as well as of great bodily activity , and he saw clearly what the conditions were of a powerful and wealthy Macedonia , saw also the opportunities which the incurable divisions and weaknesses of the Hellenic cities offered to his ambition The royal house of Macedonia, to which Alexander, Perdiccas, and Philip belonged, claimed pure Hellenic descent, and this claim had been formally admitted at Olympia⁴ The Macedonian people were not regarded as Hellenes at all, yet they were undoubtedly of kindred stock, speaking a language distinct from, yet related to, Greek Greeks who admired Philip, called him a Heraclid, but it was always open to anyone who disliked him to reproach him with the name barbarian.⁵ And not only was Philip descended

¹ See vol 1 pp 270 and 300

² See vol 1 pp 371-2

³ The ancestral kingdom to which Philip succeeded was much less extensive than the Macedonia of the modern Balkan Question Hogarth writes (*Philip and Alexander of Macedon*, p 13) "the original holding of the Macedonians was just that semi-circular expanse of low land which lies west and north of the Gulf of Salonica Whoever has sailed up that sea and ridden three days north to Vodhena, and three days east to Cavalla, has seen the whole cradle of Macedonian power" The mountains beyond were held by warlike tribes, Thracians, Paeonians, Lyncestians, whose hereditary princes usually acknowledged the suzerainty of the kings of Macedonia, but often were in rebellion Further west were the wild Illyrians, the hereditary enemies of Macedonia Perdiccas, Philip's brother, died in battle against them

⁴ See Herodotus, v 22

⁵ Demosthenes (*Third Philippic*, 40) goes so far as to brand Philip as "not even a barbarian from a country one can speak of with respect!"

from Macedonian kings, who claimed to be Hellenes, he had been trained in Hellenic ways during three of the most plastic years of his life in a Greek city-state. The city was Thebes, but Thebes when she had won the primacy of Hellas. He was one of many hostages brought to Thebes by Epaminondas after his expedition to Macedonia in 368, and fourteen years of age at the time. He learnt two things there which were invaluable to him in his after career. The one was a knowledge of the new tactics invented by the Thebans¹. The other was an inside view of the weakness of the Greek political system. He came to the throne unexpectedly on the death in battle of his brother Perdiccas, whose son was an infant and, therefore, set aside by the Macedonians. Philip began by organizing a national army, which he inured to war by a series of campaigns against the turbulent tribes on the borders of Macedonia, who had hitherto owed but a doubtful allegiance to their Macedonian overlords. He next turned his attention to the Greek cities planted along the Macedonian seaboard, and especially to the peninsula of Chalcidice with its three promontories, Actê, Sithonia and Pallenê. If Macedonia was to grow in wealth and power, harbours were indispensable. Earlier Macedonian kings² had sought to conquer the coast towns, but they had not been strong enough. Philip began in a position as little advantageous as his predecessors. Macedonia was poor and struggling, in spite of its nominal extent of territory. The Greek cities were wealthy and many in number, especially powerful was Olynthus, which, since the dissolution of the Athenian Empire, had become head of a considerable confederacy of Chalcidian towns. Athens herself, too, still had interests along this coast, where once all the towns had been included in her confederacy, and, in particular, she had a

¹ This was to hurl a massed column, many spears deeper than customary, at one point of the enemy's front, while holding all the rest with a comparatively weak line, and so break through. This was how Leuctra and Mantinea were won. A beginning of similar tactics is discernible at Delium as early as 424.

² The ablest of them was Archelaus. See Thucydides, ii. 100 2

claim which her people could not forget to the possession of Amphipolis¹ There were her Thraceward interests, also, to be considered—Thasos and the gold mines of the mainland, and most important of all, the Thracian Chersonese, commanding the Hellespont and the corn-ships from the Black Sea, which had been closely connected with Athens since the days of Miltiades. The seaward ambitions of the Macedonian kings necessarily brought them into antagonism with Athens and with Olynthus. Philip's method of dealing with this situation was characteristic. He made the Athenians believe he was favourable to their claim to Amphipolis. A little later when he had obtained possession of the place with their consent, he kept it and thus gained a footing in the gold region of Mount Pangaeus. He then made alliance with Olynthus and helped the Olynthians to take Potidaea from Athens. He thus played each of his adversaries off against the other, keeping his own ends firmly in view and taking advantage of his rivals' mistakes, he pushed on step by step eastward into Thrace and southward towards Thessaly. In twelve years' time, from 359 to 348, he had gained possession of the whole coast from Maronea and Abdera in Thrace to Mount Olympus, and was master of a military and naval power already formidable to all Hellas. He was helped in all this, partly by the supineness and shortsightedness of the city-states, partly by the fortunate occurrence of two wars. One followed a breach between Athens and the strongest of her allies, which in effect put an end to the second naval confederacy. This war, inappropriately called the Social War, ended in 355 in the defeat of Athens, a defeat which left her again much weakened. In the same year, 355, a quarrel between Thebes and the Phocians led to what is known in Greek history as the Second Sacred War.²

¹ See above, pp 170-1 and 177, also pp 37 and 38

² The first was that in which Solon the Athenian is said to have played a leading part, it broke out early in the sixth century B C, and resulted in the destruction of Cirrha, the port of Crissa, and the devotion to the god of plain lands adjacent to the harbour. See also below, pp 372 3

The Sacred War and the Peace of Philocrates.—This enmity between the Thebans and the Phocians was of ancient date and was aggravated by the sudden rise of Thebes to power through the overthrow of the Spartans at Leuctra. The Phocians refused to follow the Theban lead and retained their friendship with Sparta. To pay them out the Thebans laid a charge against them of cultivating lands consecrated to Apollo. For this a fine was imposed on the Phocians by the Council of the Amphictyonic League, which had been formed in very early times for the defence of the oracle and shrine of Apollo at Delphi.¹ There were twelve *tribes* confederated in the League, including the Phocians and Boeotians. Athens had a vote in the Council as representing the Ionians, Sparta as representing the Dorians. These 'tribes' belonged to a state of society which had preceded the city-state and passed away, and some of those represented in the Council of the League were now of very little account. Thebes exercised a vote for the Boeotians as Athens for the Ionians. The adverse vote against the Phocians had been doubtless 'worked' by the Thebans and Thessalians out of their hereditary hatred, and the Phocians declined to pay. They cherished the memory of an early claim to the possession of Delphi, and now, goaded by Theban and Thessalian spite, they seized Delphi and the temple. Thereupon the Thebans and Thessalians persuaded the Council to proclaim a 'sacred war' against them. The Phocians replied by seizing the temple treasure, and before long their leaders were employing the wealth of the god to hire mercenaries. As long as the treasure lasted the Phocians more than held their own in the struggle. They had the sympathy, though not the armed support, of Sparta and Athens. In 347 the Thebans, tired of their ill-success, invited Philip to help them, blind to any ulterior consequences to themselves from such dangerous aid. About the same time the Athenians, exhausted by their own struggle with Philip, which had been going on since 354, were strongly

¹ See above, p. 83 n.

inclined to make peace Philip wanted peace, too, and used his diplomatic skill, which was scarcely less than his mastery of war, to secure a peace which should leave him free to deal with the Phocians as he saw fit Consequently before the year 346 was over Philip had marched unopposed through Thermopylae and awed or forced the Phocians to submission The punishment meted out was that their cities were broken up into villages after the dismantling of their existing defences, and that for the repayment of the plundered treasure a huge indemnity was imposed, payable in a term of years The place and vote of the Phocians in the Amphictyonic Council were declared forfeit, and conferred on Philip. When the Pythian Games were celebrated at Delphi in September, Philip acted as President

Philip and the War with Persia.—The dominant feeling among the Athenians was that they had been cheated over the peace, deceived and betrayed by their own ambassadors acting in collusion with Philip. But many Hellenes, dazzled by Philip's personal brilliancy and successes, were willing to see in him the man of destiny and accept his leadership for Hellas There were many in Athens who took this view Nor was it altogether without reason. No one among the Greeks who observed and reflected could fail to be aware of the evils produced by the ceaseless conflicts of Greeks against Greeks (which were really civil war) and of the collective impotence which resulted from them This almost continual state of civil war had ended in making the King of Persia, whose might had been broken in the glorious years from Salamis to the Eurymedon, arbiter of destiny to the Hellenic peoples Throughout the last phase of the Peloponnesian war the king's fleet clearly held the balance between the contending confederacies We have seen (p. 235) how Persian support had been bought by the Spartans at the price of the liberty of the Asiatic Greeks After the victory of Sparta, desultory attempts were made by Agesilaus and other Spartan leaders to recover the sea-board where the Ionian and Dorian cities were planted.

But this new attempt to liberate the Asiatic Greeks was shortlived. In 387 the Great King, acting in concert with Sparta, imposed a peace on Hellas, the Peace of Antalcidas, which formally confirmed the King's dominion over all Asia Minor. Many Hellenes, however, felt the ignominy of such a peace and the scandal of the subjection of Hellenic cities to Persian satraps. There were those who talked and wrote of a new war with Persia, a war in which a united Hellas should retort upon the Persian Empire the invasion of 480 and many humiliations since. The old terror of the Persian name was long ago dead. The easy superiority of Greek men-at-arms to Asiatic troops had been demonstrated in many encounters. The campaigns of Agesilaus, though fruitless of permanent results, had revealed the weakness of the Persian Empire beneath an appearance of strength. Above all, the Greeks who had marched with Cyrus into the very heart of the Persian Empire and then, in defiance of the Great King's utmost efforts, fought their way back to the shore of the Black Sea, had shown that a compact body of Greek soldiers could do pretty much what they pleased, so long as they kept together with arms in their hands, however great the number of barbarian enemies who swarmed around them. To those who meditated these things it seemed preposterous that any Hellenes should be ruled by Persian satraps, when the superiority in arms of Greeks to barbarians was really so great.

Isocrates.—It was the lifelong mission of Isocrates to preach to all Hellenes the wisdom and the duty of laying aside the petty jealousies and enmities which had so long kept Hellas divided, and of uniting in a war of liberation and of conquest against the Persian Empire, now palpably too enfeebled to resist a resolute attack. At first he had hoped for union under the joint leadership of Sparta and Athens. This is the tenor of his most finished and perfect discourse, the *Panegyric*,¹ which

¹ *Pan-egyric* is an adjective formed from *pan-egyris*, which means a general gathering, *i.e.* a gathering of all Hellas, and a *panegyric* is a speech delivered before such a national assemblage.

purports to be addressed to all the Hellenes assembled at Olympia for the festival of 380 B.C. The idea was far from novel—who that pondered the state of Hellas for the half century backward to 430, but must have seen the folly of the strife of Greeks against Greeks and have welcomed as an escape from it the project of a national war against Persia? Lysias had advocated this in an Olympic address in 388, and Gorgias considerably earlier. But thirty years later, in the year of the Peace of Philocrates (346), Isocrates had come to despair of ever winning Thebes, Athens, Sparta, Argos, and the lesser city-states, to any voluntary union, and had turned instead to the hope of some personal sovereign, some prince of Hellenic stock, who might effectively take the lead and compel the Hellenes to follow him as their general-in-chief—to Jason of Pherae, Dionysius of Syracuse, and now, finally, with better promise to Philip. Accordingly, in 346 (the year of the Peace of Philocrates), when Isocrates was already ninety years of age, he addressed to Philip a sort of open letter, inviting, persuading, him in plain terms to take up this task of leading the whole confederate strength of Hellas against the Persian Empire. “It is my purpose,” he says, expressly, early in this pamphlet, “to urge you to take the lead in promoting unity among the Hellenes and in conducting an expedition against the barbarians.”¹ The objects of such an expedition he states quite frankly “if possible to conquer the whole of the king’s dominions, or, failing this, to detach large part of it, I mean all Asia west of a line drawn from Cilicia to Sinopê.”² He presses this undertaking on Philip as a duty, a mission to which he is called as a prince and a Heraclid, born ruler of a country beyond the bounds of Hellas, and so aloof from and above the traditional enmities and rivalries of the city-states. “You who by your birth are free of particular ties, it behoves,” he writes, “to consider all Hellas as your fatherland and to face danger on its behalf no less than on behalf of those who are your special concern.”³ These are remarkable views for one who had

¹ *Philippus*, 16

² *Philippus*, 120

³ *Philippus*, 127

lived a retired life as thinker and student for three-quarters of a century, and who had no motive whatever to flatter Philip or mislead his fellow-countrymen. They are the views, too, of the man who had elaborated the art of writing persuasive speech (Isocrates never spoke in public) to a finish never approached before or since¹.

National Party at Athens.—This was one possible view of Philip and his rise to power. In every Greek state there were men who were friendly to Philip's schemes, some, like Isocrates, from honest conviction of the needs of the times, some because they had met Philip and been attracted by his liberality, his manly frankness and his *bonhomie*, others, again, because Philip made bribery as effective a means of accomplishing his purposes as weapons of war. But it was, to say the least of it, a difficult view for a patriotic Athenian, who had been brought up to regard her championship of Hellenic liberty as the peculiar glory of Athens, and her democratic institutions as the consummated expression of that liberty. There was, therefore, a strong national party at Athens opposed to the pretensions of Philip in the conviction that, not the Great King, but Philip, was now the enemy. Foremost among these was the statesman-orator Demosthenes, whose speeches are the most splendid monument of Attic oratory. It is Demosthenes' heroic struggle to nerve his countrymen to energetic action in face of the Macedonian danger, and his proud choice for Athens of resistance rather than tame submission out of keeping with her glorious past, which makes a chapter on Greek oratory worth while.

Demosthenes.—Demosthenes, the son of Demosthenes, of Paeania, was born in 384, three years after the Peace of Antalcidas. He was not, any more than Themistocles, of absolutely pure Athenian descent, he had a grand-

¹ Isocrates is said to have devoted ten years to the composition of his *Panegyric*, a work filling some fifty ordinary octavo pages of modern print. He exercised extraordinary care in the avoidance of *hiatus*, that is, the juxtaposition of vowel sounds, one at the end of a word, the other at the beginning of the next. He also elaborated many subtle rules for the structure of the prose *period*.

mother who was a 'Scythian' of the Tauric Chersonese. This furnished his enemy, Aeschines, with a cheap taunt, but does not appear otherwise to have affected his position and influence. His father belonged to the commercial class and possessed considerable wealth, but died when Demosthenes was seven years old, leaving to his two children an ample fortune. Demosthenes, when he reached manhood, should have been wealthy, but his guardians, two being cousins and the third his father's dear friend, were unfaithful to their trust and cheated him. With difficulty and after wearisome litigation, Demosthenes recovered part of his patrimony, but much was wasted in the process. It was the necessity of fighting for his rights in the law-courts which first led Demosthenes to study the art of public speaking; the need of supplementing narrow means which induced him afterwards to adopt the writing of speeches for litigants as a profession. Then something fired him with ambition, he resolved to become a public speaker in the Ecclesia. He had serious difficulties to overcome, and curious stories are told of the determined perseverance by which he overcame them.¹ He was shy, awkward, and with a defect in his speech. No aspirant to the honours of public speaking can well have started with more against him. Of his shyness, or rather nervousness, in later life a notable instance has been recorded by Aeschines.² But something more than ambition must have carried Demosthenes to the course of action on which his fame mainly rests. He had a profound belief in the greatness of Athens as the guardian of Hellenic ideas and Hellenic freedom, and was imbued with admiration for the part she had played during and after the Persian War. These convictions he had drunk in through his study of Greek history, more particularly of Thucydides, the influence of whose 'speeches,' can be traced in his own style.

¹ See Plutarch, *Demosthenes*, 6-8

² Aeschines in his speech *On the Embassy*, describes Demosthenes as breaking down completely when his turn (as one of ten ambassadors) came to speak in presence of Philip.

Public Life and Speeches to 346 B.C.—It was in 354, when he was thirty years of age, that he first took part in a debate on public affairs the object of his speech was to remedy existing abuses in the system of boards called 'symmories,' which at this time provided the state service, formerly discharged by the trierarchs. His first speech of general historic interest is the speech, delivered in 351, known as the First Philippic.¹ Philip was pushing his advance along the coast both eastward and to the south he had taken Methonê in 354, Abdera and Maronea in 353. The war had been dragging on since 355 and only once had Philip been effectually checked. This was in 352 when he was marching on Thermopylae. At this threat of danger to the northern gates of Hellas, the Athenians for once acted with promptitude and vigour. They sent ample forces to reinforce the defence, and Philip withdrew baffled. In the year of Demosthenes' speech the Athenian Assembly was discussing the position of affairs and Demosthenes took the opportunity to press the necessity of measures to put the military and naval forces of Athens into better order. His scheme, which is carefully thought out in all details, is itself eloquent of the contrast between fifth and fourth century Athens. Demosthenes advocates the maintenance on a permanent war-footing of an expeditionary force of 2000 infantry and 200 cavalry, and, over and above a fleet of fifty ordinary warships, ten fast-sailing triremes for the safe convoy of the expeditionary force. He proposes, further, to make provision for the regular payment of the troops and of the ships' crews.² These points are so elementary that one can but marvel that such reforms should have been necessary. It is a measure of the decline of Athens in warlike spirit. Most of all eloquent is his insistence on the imperative need of personal service. Not less than 500 of the infantry and fifty of the

¹ It is the first of three speeches in which Demosthenes puts forth his utmost power to bring home to the Athenians what manner of enemy they have in Philip, and the measures necessary to meet the danger.

² *First Philippic*, 16-29.

horsemen must be native-born Athenians *This* to the descendants in the second or third generation of the men who had hurried to man the fleet at every crisis in the Peloponnesian War But now in 351, though Athens was wealthier than before, and not less populous, her citizens shirked personal service and preferred to get mercenaries to do their fighting Only the generals in command were Athenians The Athenian people did not even as a rule pay their mercenaries, but let them live on the war and, if that failed, from 'benevolences,' that is, forced contributions from their allies, justifying Demosthenes' taunt that Athenian armies had become a greater terror to her friends than to her enemies Demosthenes contrasts Philip's energy and courage with Athenian remissness, at the same time he assures them that if they will but rouse themselves, and resolve each man to do his part, they may even yet retrieve their fortunes "God willing, you will get back what is your own, you will recover what has been lost by neglect and you will punish Philip"¹ After all Philip is but human and may be beaten "There are those who hate him and fear him and envy him"² The Athenians show efficiency in the management of their state festivals, the Panathenaea, the Great Dionysia, why not, pleads Demosthenes, in the conduct of a campaign They must learn to plan beforehand and anticipate Philip's strokes He compares Athenian methods of warfare to the movements of an inexpert boxer "Hit him in one place, his arms move in the direction of the blow, hit him in another and there go his hands He neither can nor will parry in time or look his antagonist in the face"³ His description shows the Athenians of the fourth century changed indeed from the Athenians who excited the fear and envy of the Corinthians in B C 431⁴ —"Just in the same way, if you get intelligence that Philip is in the Chersonese, you vote an expedition to go there, or if you hear of him as at Thermopylae, or in any other place, you run hither and

¹ *First Philippic*, 10

² *First Philippic*, 11

³ *First Philippic*, 46

⁴ See Thucydides 1

thither after him and let yourselves be led. You have never yourselves formed any sound plan for the war, you show no foresight whatever, but wait till you hear that something has happened or is happening ”¹ Demosthenes is, in fact, urging upon the Athenians the importance of the initiative in war. But it is a bold orator who speaks thus to the sovereign demos, less capable of decision and action than the demos whom Aristophanes burlesques in comedy, but not less masterful in his own house, not less potent to kill and to leave alive. Never was there a statesman who pointed out more plainly to his countrymen the path of duty, or insisted more uncompromisingly on unpleasant truths. “Indeed it is not by reason of his own strength that he is grown so great but by reason of your negligence ”² “But when, I pray you, gentlemen, shall we resolve to do our duty ? ”³ Most of all he reiterates the supreme necessity of personal service : “ Shall we not go on board ? Shall we not serve in some part in our own persons—now if never before ? ”⁴

Nothing that Demosthenes so vehemently urged was done, with the result that Philip went on in his career unchecked. In 349 he was threatening Olynthus, in 348 Olynthus and all the towns of her confederacy were destroyed. On three occasions Demosthenes made passionate appeal to the men of Athens to go to the rescue of Olynthus, while there was time. “ When you consider all this, men of Athens, I say you must be resolved, you must kindle your zeal to the utmost and give your minds to the war, now if never before, you must contribute eagerly, you must serve in your own persons, there must be nothing left undone ”⁵ The Athenians sent troops to Chalcidicê, but the force was not constituted as Demosthenes counselled, nor was it properly paid. A better organized force, despatched when Olynthus was in the throes of her death-struggle, arrived too late. And so one

¹ *First Philippic*, 47

² *First Philippic*, 14

³ *On the Chersonese*, 52

⁴ *First Philippic*, 50

⁵ *First Olynthiac*, 6

more barrier between Athens and Macedonian aggression was down

Demosthenes and Aeschines.—In 346, as we have seen, both Athens and Philip were tired of war and inclined to peace. A peace was made, known as the Peace of Philocrates, but so badly managed for Athens that Philip secured all the advantages, Athens nothing but the bare cessation of hostilities. The Phocians, who were virtually, though not technically, in alliance with Athens, were sacrificed, with the result that Philip now slipped through the barrier of Thermopylae and appeared with an army in territories separated from Athens only by the breadth of Boeotia, territories at the time unfriendly to Athens. Demosthenes had been in favour of peace, and had been one of an embassy of ten who negotiated it, but for the disastrous character of the peace actually made, he blamed two of his colleagues on the embassy—Philocrates, after whom the peace was named and Aeschines, who lives in history as Demosthenes' antagonist in two famous trials. Philocrates went into exile rather than face a trial on a charge of betraying the interests of his country, and was condemned to death in his absence. Aeschines was prosecuted by Demosthenes on a similar charge. The business of the embassies is far too tangled to be entered upon here, we must be content only to note that in 343 the case against Aeschines was tried and that he escaped condemnation by a small majority. The speeches of the two eloquent rivals, Demosthenes and Aeschines (for Aeschines too was no mean orator), remain for us to read to-day and make one of the most interesting state trials on record. The other and still more interesting trial came on thirteen years later, and then the rôles were reversed. Aeschines was now the accuser and Demosthenes on his defence, though, technically, the defendant was Ctesiphon. The charge was a *graphê paranomôn*, based on alleged illegalities in Ctesiphon's proposal (B.C. 336) that a crown of honour should be conferred on Demosthenes for his services to his country, but really it was the whole policy and career of Demosthenes which was on trial, and

all Athens knew it. It was a duel between two public men, one of whom had taken sides with Philip and the other opposed him steadily. It is a state trial comparable, in interest and significance with the trial of John Hampden before the Star Chamber, or of Warren Hastings in Westminster Hall, when principles were arraigned and judged rather than men. For six years Aeschines did not venture to follow up his indictment of Ctesiphon, but in 330, when Alexander had begun his career of conquest in Asia and Macedonian power was dominant throughout Greece, he thought his opportunity had come. The verdict of the Athenian judges was clear and decisive. Aeschines failed to obtain the fifth part of the votes and thereby became liable to heavy penalties for bringing a frivolous charge, and rather than pay the fine he went into exile for the rest of his days.

Yet the policy which the Athenians thus deliberately ratified with their approval many years after the event had brought on Greece the disaster of Chaeronea. The cause in which Demosthenes spent the strength of his eloquence, the maintenance of the independent life of the Hellenic city-state in face of the expanding power of the Macedonian kingdom, had ended in defeat and humiliation: he himself in the end was to pay the last price of resistance¹. It might seem that there was nothing but a tragic futility in the story of the most famous of Athenian orators. For long years Demosthenes appears to be engaged in the heart-breaking task of repeating convincing arguments in the ears of men perfectly able to appreciate them intellectually, but too comfortably sunk in the refined ease of fourth century Athens, or too wanting in will-power to turn conviction into action. His effort seems to exhaust itself in words. Yet there was one short period of two years, from a little after the delivery of the Third Philippic (341 B.C.), during which Demosthenes wielded a commanding influence at Athens and

¹ This was not till the year after Alexander's death, and was by command of Antipater, Alexander's viceroy in Europe. See Plutarch's *Life of Demosthenes*.

was a leader of men worthy of the days of Athenian greatness

Demosthenes and Philip.—Philip's aggrandisement did not cease with the Peace of Philocrates, but rather received a new impetus. Demosthenes in his speeches reiterates the conviction that hostilities were really renewed by Philip "from the very day on which he annihilated the Phocians." Steadily his army continued to advance along the coast of Thrace threatening the Thracian Chersonese and the Bosphorus. When news came that Philip was attacking Perinthus and Selymbria, Greek cities on the Propontis within a short distance of Byzantium, the Athenians became suddenly alive to the nearness of the peril that again hung over them. If Philip gained command of the Bosphorus, Athens was at his mercy, for, as we have so often noticed that way came her corn. So the Ecclesia was roused at last and listened to Demosthenes. It was by his advice that an expedition, under Phocion, was sent to Euboea to checkmate Macedonian influence there. Demosthenes himself went on a mission to Byzantium and brought the jealous rival city into close alliance with Athens. Then came open war, and a Macedonian attack on Byzantium: but Philip in 340 was completely foiled, after prodigious effort and the use of every device known to his engineers he had to abandon the sieges of both Perinthus and Byzantium. Golden crowns were voted to Athens in token of gratitude by these two cities and by the cities of the Chersonese. Demosthenes was the hero of the hour. In 339, again, the event of war went against Philip. This time he led his army with daring and success northward as far as to the Danube, reducing one warlike tribe after another, but was attacked in the Balkans on the way back by the Triballi and badly wounded. Meantime, at Athens, Demosthenes at last carried the reform in the working of the trierarchic system, which he had proposed vainly in 354. Its object was to ensure that the wealthy shouldered a fair share of the burden by contributing in proportion to their wealth.

The measure, therefore, had to be carried in face of the opposition of powerful vested interests. The effect was marked improvement in efficiency. Demosthenes was able afterwards to claim that during the two years, from 340 to Chaeronea, not a single ship was lost at sea, or kept from sailing through defective equipment. How long this success might have continued, and how far it would have gone to change the current of history, who shall venture to say? The more hopeful prospect for Athens was ruined by an incident, trifling in its origin, but momentous in its consequences, which took place at Delphi in the autumn of 339.

Aeschines at Delphi.—The story is more like romance than sober history. It happened that at the spring meeting of the Delphic Amphictyony the Locrians of Amphissa, to gratify their friends the Thebans, charged the Athenians with an offence against religion,¹ and sought to get a heavy fine imposed as punishment. When Aeschines, who was one of four officers² representing Athens on the Council, attempted to reply, he was interrupted by a speaker from Amphissa, who roundly denounced the people of Athens as unfit to be represented on the Council of the Amphictyons at all. Aeschines himself provides the account of what followed. He describes himself as extremely angry. “I was never so incensed in my life,” he says.³ From where he stood he could look down over the valley of the Pleistus and see the plain of Cirrha (the port of Chrissa) and the harbour itself beyond.⁴ We may see the same view from the steeps of Delphi to-day. And he remembered the curse pronounced on this stretch of land after the early sacred war of Solon’s time, on those who should ever cultivate the land again, or rebuild the harbour, on those also who

¹ They were charged with replacing the shields dedicated as spoils of war after Plataea, before the temple itself had been reconsecrated on its restoration. The restoration had been necessary in consequence of damage done by fire in 373 B.C.

² A Hieromnemon and three Pylagori. Aeschines was one of the Pylagori.

³ Aeschines, against Ctesiphon, 118.

⁴ See I p. 214 n.



THE VALLEY OF THE PALISADES

AS SEEN FROM DELPHIN.

From a photograph by the French Photographic Company, Illino.

failed to punish the authors of any such sacrilege. He pointed all this out to the *Amphictyons*, he read to them the words of the oracle spoken from Delphi, of the oath of the Council, and of the curse. Aeschines was master of a readier eloquence than Demosthenes, and he was angry. He spoke with such passion that the *Amphictyons*—men unused, as Demosthenes says, to oratory of a finished kind—were swept off their feet. Soon there was excitement and uproar in all Delphi, and next morning, in obedience to a proclamation made overnight, the whole male population of full age, slaves and free men alike, marched down in a tumultuous body into the plain below Delphi, armed with picks and shovels, and there proceeded to demolish the little harbour of Cirrha and burn down the houses about it. This work of destruction accomplished in the name of religion, the Delphians set off homeward. On the way back they were attacked by the men of Amphissa, who sallied out under arms when they heard what was afoot, overtook the aggressors, and chased them back to Delphi. This act of the Amphis-saeans was naturally represented by their enemies as an aggravation of their guilt and the result was the proclamation of a 'sacred war.' Nothing more was heard of the supposed offence of the Athenians. Aeschines might naturally enough plume himself on the efficacy of his counter-stroke for Athens.

Elatea and the Judgment of the Sword.—But there were other effects he had not thought of. Demosthenes himself believed that Aeschines was deliberately playing into Philip's hands. At any rate, his action opened to Philip the way to a new interposition in Hellenic affairs, which once and for all ended Greek political independence. For the *Amphictyonic Council*, when they found the execution of judgment on the Amphisaeans by force of arms too difficult for them, adopted the convenient expedient of calling in Philip to fight for them. Philip responded with alacrity, it was again the very opportunity he had been waiting for. On receiving this invitation from the League, he at once set his troops in motion.

and marched from Lamia into Phocis Thence, instead of going straight on through what is now the Pass of Gravia to Amphissa, his supposed objective, he turned aside and occupied Elatea, one of the strong places of Phocis before its fortifications were destroyed and its people scattered in 346 What his intentions were cannot be known with certainty, but this action excited the greatest alarm at Athens, which at the time, it must be remembered, was at war with him Elatea did not lead to Amphissa, but it was on the direct route into Attica through Boeotia Demosthenes in his speech 'On the Crown' gives a vivid description of the panic at Athens when Philip's presence at Elatea became known "It was evening, you remember, when the news came to the Prytanes that Elatea had been occupied They were at supper, but rose at once, some to turn the shopmen out of their booths in the market-place and make a bonfire of the wicker materials, some to send word to the generals and summon the trumpeter The whole city was in commotion Next morning at daylight the Prytanes summoned the Council to the Council Chamber, while you took your way to the Assembly the whole people was seated on the slope of the hill before the Council had finished its business and passed a draft resolution And after this when the Council came and reported the news that had been received, and had brought the messenger in, and when he had made his statement, the herald proceeded to put the question, 'Who wishes to speak ?' ¹ No one, however, came forward, and though the officer put the question several times, there was still no response" Demosthenes goes on to relate how he alone that day showed the qualities of a statesman, and took upon himself the responsibility of directing affairs at this crisis It was at his suggestion and through his influence, that overtures were made to Thebes and an alliance, offensive and defensive, eventually concluded, in spite of the ancient enmity between the two peoples, that this alliance was strengthened by the adhesion to it of the Euboeans,

¹ Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 169



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Map to illustrate PHILIP'S MARCH TO ELATEA IN 339 B C ,
 showing alternative routes (1) by Thermopylae , (2) through Cytinium
 and Dadion (line of the modern road)

Acharnians, Achaeans, of Corcyra, Leucas and Megara, that Philip's advance was checked in the winter of 339, and that in the spring of 338 a powerful Hellenic army confronted Philip at Chaeronea. The citizen forces of Thebes and Athens fought bravely, but they were scarcely a match for Philip's veteran army, and they had no leader of even moderate ability, whereas Philip was master of the art of war and had with him in command of one wing the son who was to be famous as a conqueror through Europe and Asia. A charge of horsemen, led by Alexander in person, broke the stubborn defence of the Thebans, the Athenians were drawn on by a feigned retreat, then counter-attacked and routed. Demosthenes' policy had ended in disaster.

Chaeronea—The price in immediate physical suffering, indeed, was paid by Thebes, not Athens. The Theban prisoners were sold into slavery, the Theban patriots were punished with confiscation, exile and death. A Macedonian garrison occupied the Cadmeia. Athens was admitted to terms and the terms granted by Philip were generous. Her 2000 prisoners were restored without ransom, the bones of her slain were brought back to the city with military honours. The Chersonese was at last lost to her and her confederacy was finally dissolved, but even so she was allowed to keep possession of Delos, Lemnos, Imbros, Scyros and Samos. Her great name had saved her from destruction in 404; and now in 338 (and again three years later on a fresh appeal to arms after Philip's death) her primacy in arts and literature protected her and her degenerate people from the consequences of defeat. Thebes in 335 was so utterly blotted out that Aeschines in his speech *On the Crown* shrinks from even speaking her name, saying only, “I pray that misfortune like to hers may not come upon any city of the Hellenes”; Athens was spared by Alexander, as she was spared by Philip, his father. It was policy, no doubt, in part: Athens was the intellectual capital of Hellas, and Philip's aspiration, and Alexander's after him was to be not only master of Hellenic military strength, but

also the enlightened propagator of Hellenic culture. Yet in the verdict of posterity, over against Demosthenes' denunciation of the Macedonian 'barbarians,' must be set this gentleness and generosity towards 'the mother of arts and eloquence.'

There is no need to refuse admiration to Philip's great qualities because we sympathize (if we do) with Demosthenes. Yet it is with good reason that Chaeronea has been graven on the tablets of history as the death-blow of Hellenic liberty. For after Chaeronea there was no more political liberty in Hellas as we and the fifth-century Hellenes understand it. If we look into the matter a little deeply, we see that in essence the issue between Demosthenes and Philip, Athens and Macedonia, was again the conflict between free institutions and autocracy.¹ The Greek city-states, it is true, through their narrow self-concentration and their inability to find any principle of free, but stable, union, and through the bitter feuds by which their strength was exhausted, had by this time proved the insufficiency of the ideal of a nation of autonomous city-states. In Athens the Athenians of Demosthenes' day had so fallen away from their earlier standard of courage, energy, and devotion, as to seem hardly worth the saving, the Macedonian monarch professed to adopt Hellenic culture, and carried this culture with him, when he set out on a career of conquest in Asia.² Yet in essence the issue fought out at Chaeronea was the issue of Marathon and Salamis—autocracy versus free institutions—and this time autocracy won. The empire which Alexander conquered in twelve astonishing years with the weapons made ready by his father Philip, was almost as much a despotism as the Persian. The real issue was scarcely revealed while Alexander lived, but only in the dynasties which fought over and broke up the

¹ Compare vol. 1 pp. 390-93

² Professor Jebb writes (*Attic Orators*, vol. 11 p. 439) "Philip, Alexander and their Successors were indeed the apostles of Greek language, Greek art, Greek social civilisation but between Hellas and Hellenism there was a spiritual separation which no force of the individual mind could do away."

dominion his genius created. What the victory of Macedonia meant for Athens is not seen in 338, or even in 335. It is seen rather when, in 307, Demetrius Poliorcetes entered Athens to be worshipped there as a god, and to pollute the temple of Athena Polias with his debaucheries. Milton judged rightly when he called Chaeronea 'that dishonest victory.'

Even looking to the larger world-issues it is by no means clear that the Athenians were wrong to resist Philip rather than accept with complacency his proffered favours and lend their good-will and the great name of Athens to the support of his designs. The history of Syria under the Seleucids, of Egypt under the Ptolemies, of Macedonia under the House of Antigonus, is for the most part sorry reading. But on the narrower ground of what was due to their own self-respect as inheritors of the traditions of Athenian statesmanship, without doubt the Athenians were right when they listened to Demosthenes and made a last great effort to maintain the real freedom of their institutions. That Demosthenes had the will and the ability so to persuade them was, notwithstanding the adverse verdict of Chaeronea, a noble achievement worthy the Athens of Themistocles and Pericles. Demosthenes' own words get nearest to the ultimate truth: "Even if the issue had been manifest to all beforehand, if all the world had known what it must be . . . even then I say our city should not have turned from the course she followed—not if she was to take account of her fame, of our forefathers, and of future ages."¹ "But it is not possible, it is not possible that you were wrong, men of Athens, when you chose to risk everything for the freedom and safety of all."²

¹ Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 199

² Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, 208

CHAPTER XIV

GREEK DRAMA

1 A TRAGIC TRILOGY IN FIFTH CENTURY ATHENS

“ Not so I deem, though sole I stand it is the impious deed
That sin on sin begetteth, like children of ill breed ”

AESCHYLUS, *Agamemnon*, ll 757-60

“ The soul that sinneth, *it shall die* ”

Ezekiel, 18, 20.

GREEK drama is almost wholly Attic, the peculiar glory of Athens, yet it ultimately became a possession in which all Hellenes took pride and delight. A thousand years later in the world's history, through imitation and inspiration, it gave impulse to the unfolding of the modern drama in all its forms. Our part in it is twofold. One part is independent of our own volition. Whether we are interested or not, the drama of our own times derives from the Greek.¹ The other depends on ourselves. If we take a little trouble, the forty-four surviving dramas of the Greek theatre may be to us a source of high and noble pleasure.

Unlikeness of Greek to Modern Plays.—People reading a Greek play for the first time in an English translation are apt to be repelled by a certain high-strung artificiality in the language, and what seems a crude simplicity of plot and action. And certainly, if, uncritically, we apply modern standards of judgment, the verdict is likely to be unfavourable. In important respects a Greek play is very unlike a modern play, in spite of the historic

¹ See vol 1 pp 10 and 11

continuity which can be traced between them. Before we are in a position to appreciate a Greek play justly, we must take account of the differences. The greatest difference of all is that the performance of a Greek play was not primarily a means of amusement or even a form of artistic expression. It was first and foremost an act of religion.

Dramatic Contests at Athens.—It was at Athens that tragedies and comedies were developed into literary drama, and at Athens new plays, both tragedies and comedies were written for dramatic competitions which were incidental to the festivals of Dionysus. Both were produced at one or other of two great festivals, and especially at the Great Dionysia held at Athens in the early spring¹. In the Great Dionysia there were contests of rival choirs, choirs of men and choirs of boys, and there were contests between poets who wrote tragedies and poets who wrote comedies. It was not, however, open to any citizen who thought himself competent to write plays to enter for these great public competitions. Every year a preliminary trial was held by the archons, and three poets, and three only, were chosen to compete for the prize in tragedy, and three in comedy. This at least was the practice in the fifth century². And in tragedy the demand on the poet's genius was peculiarly exacting. Each of the three competitors was required to produce not one play, but four—three tragedies and a burlesque after-piece called a satyric drama. These sets of three tragedies and a satyric drama came to be known in certain cases as tetralogies; and the three tragedies as a trilogy or set of three. The subjects of the four plays

¹ The other Dionysiac festival at which dramas (especially comedies) were produced was the *Lenaea*. This came two months earlier in the year (as we reckon it), in January. The *Lenaea*, the winter festival, was the vintage thanksgiving and a time of jollity and license. The *Great Dionysia* was the spring festival, the festival of the renewing of life. And these festivals at Athens were but special examples of vintage feasts celebrated in the villages of Attica (*Rural Dionysia*), and throughout all Greece.

² Later, in the fourth century, there were five comedies.

might be connected, but were not necessarily so. The four plays might be, and were more often, if we may judge from the information that has come down to us, independent in subject. But when three tragedies were connected, dealing with successive episodes in the history of one of the great legendary families, the House of Labdacus, or the House of Atreus, we manifestly reach a highly complex and massive form of art. And this was a *trilogy*. If the satyric drama also bore upon the same general subject the four connected plays were a *tetralogy*.

Aeschylus' Oresteia.—It happens that among the thirty-three Greek tragedies that survive, we possess three which make a trilogy, Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroe*¹ and *Eumenides*, together forming an *Oresteia*, or story of Orestes. This is the one surviving example of such an associated group of plays, the tragic trilogy, in which Greek drama culminates, and has, therefore, peculiar interest. We know, too, the year, and the circumstances in which these plays were produced, and perhaps no better way is open to us of reaching some apprehension of what Greek drama at its height was, and was not, than to outline briefly the action of this Aeschylean trilogy. Such accordingly will be the method of this chapter.

The Great Dionysia, 458 B.C.—It was the year 458 B.C., the year following what we have called (p. 39 above) 'the annus mirabilis' of Athenian imperial expansion when in distant Egypt Memphis became the prize of Athenian arms, and at home the Peloponnesians were defeated in the Saronic Gulf, Naupactus was garrisoned for Athens by the exiles from Ithomê, and Megara became an Athenian stronghold commanding the Isthmus. In 458 the war with Aegina was going on: the Aeginetans were defeated at sea, while on land Myronides gained his two famous victories with his army of middle-aged men and youths, and the *Long Walls* of Athens had been begun. These years were the climax of the external fortunes of Athens, when the consciousness of her imperial mission

¹ *Choe-phoroe* means 'Libation-bearers'.

was at its height. It was shortly after the great crisis in her internal history, as a result of which the Council of the Areopagus was shorn of its ancient power and of much of its remaining prestige. Cimon had been ostracized in 461, and the long period of Pericles' predominance had begun. In 460 Athens had entered into close alliance with Argos. All these events have significance in relation to the *Oresteia*.

The Great, or City, Dionysia took place from the 11th to the 15th Elaphebolion, that is approximately the last days of March and the first days of April, when the Athenian year is at its best. On the first day there was a procession through the streets of Athens in which many of the citizens and their wives and daughters took part. This procession partook somewhat of the nature of a carnival and the crowd was in sportive mood. Many wore the disguise of Satyrs and Sileni¹. On three of the other days the people crowded to the Theatre of Dionysus to see the plays exhibited in the dramatic contests. The theatre, though not in important particulars the theatre of which we visit the remains to-day, was in the same position under the south-east cliff of the Acropolis; and some, if not all of the rows of stone seats still to be seen there, were there in 458 B.C., not, however, either the marble chairs of the magistrates nor the throne of the Priest of Dionysus. The crowd came early, for the four plays had to be got through with daylight enough left for a comedy in the late afternoon. The crowd that filled the spacious auditorium was mostly men, and the men were, in the main, full-grown citizens of Athens; but there were a few women—in a block specially reserved for them—many resident aliens (metics), and a good number of foreign visitors; even slaves were admitted by special favour. The whole number of persons present

¹ *Silene* were the attendants of Dionysus in Ionian mythology. *Satyrs* in Dorian. *Silene* had horses' ears and hoofs and tails, *Satyrs* were like goats. But in the course of the fifth century B.C. the Attic conception of Dionysus' attendants came under Dorian influences and the result was some confusion and compromise. See Flickinger, *The Greek Theater and its Drama*, p. 16.

did not fall far short of 20,000¹ They were close-packed, without any division between seat and seat, the seats rose, tier above tier, up to where once was the Choragic Monument of Thrasyllus, and where the Chapel of our Lady of the Cavern now is. The noise, as the crowd surged to their places, was like the roar of the distant sea. The auditorium of the Theatre of Dionysus at Athens is in shape two-thirds of a great circle. On the ground level was the *orchestra*, the dancing-ground of the original singers of the goat-song,² from which the literary drama took its origin. Beyond a passage (called the *parodos*) which cut one segment from the full circle of which the seats took up two-thirds, was a wooden building extending nearly the whole length of the chord and the front of this building was hung with painted canvas representing scenery. On this day of the Feast of Dionysus in 458 B.C. the scene represents the façade of a stately building soon to be recognized as the Palace of Agamemnon. This was not designed, as it would be now, with any eye to archaeological accuracy. The Athenians were too much occupied in building up their empire and in making new experiments of the possibilities of human achievement in drama and in architecture and the plastic arts, to trouble about the proper construction of a Mycenaean fortress-palace. The building facing the audience was more like a temple of the fifth century than a palace at Tiryns or Mycenae. There were Doric columns supporting an architrave and pediment, in the front of the building were three doors, a wide and lofty central door (after the fashion of the great double doors afterwards built for the Propylaea and the Erechtheum), and a smaller door on either side, right and left. In front of the central door was a small altar, in the spaces between the doors

¹ The number of spectators in the Theatre is more than once referred to as 30,000, careful calculation in modern times makes the seating capacity of the auditorium 17,000

² *Tragos* is a he-goat, and the word tragedy is formed by the combination of 'tragos' with 'ōdē,' song or ode. If we can find out what the goat song in Attica was, we are obviously on the way to discover the origin of Greek tragedy.

stood images of Zeus, Apollo, Hermes, and other gods. Three steps lead up to the palace for the rest the "stage" is on the level of the orchestra.

The Agamemnon in outline.—Presently a trumpet-blast sounds and a herald comes forward and proclaims: "A play of Aeschylus, the Agamemnon"

A figure is seen on the parapet which runs as a narrow ledge along the top of the palace-front, the figure of a man in the dress and armour of an Homeric warrior. He paces up and down the parapet, then comes to a stand and begins to speak. He tells of the tediousness of a night-watch he has now kept for a twelve-month at the bidding of the queen-regent, looking south-eastward across the plain of Argolis for a beacon-light which should flare on the great mountains, and signal to him the fall of Troy. He complains, as he resumes his slow patrol, that his life has been no better than a dog's. then he stops again, and after gazing fixedly to the left, breaks suddenly into a shout

"Oh welcome, welcome light! Thou blaze that bringest
A day-dawn in deep night How many a dance
In Argos shall be ordered for thy sake!"

He calls on the queen to welcome the glad tidings, and soon an answering shout comes from within the palace, the women's exultant outcry¹. But even in the midst of his own rejoicings at the new hope of the homecoming of his lord, the watchman hints darkly that all is not well in Argos itself: there is something of which he dare not openly speak. The audience know well what it is. For the queen is Clytaemnestra, wife of Agamemnon, king of men, and she has betrayed her husband in his absence

¹ Mr J T Sheppard develops very skilfully the dramatic significance of this triumphant cry—the Greek word is 'ololugmos' (see also ll 587, 1236 and 1394). In the *Choephoroe* and in the *Eumenides* analogous use is made of a cry, in the one case the queen's cry of terror in the night, in the other the priestess's cry of alarm from within the temple. See Mr Sheppard's study, "The Prelude of the Agamemnon" in the *Classical Review* for February-March, 1922, a miracle of keen-eyed and illuminating criticism.

and taken for her lover his kinsman and sworn enemy, Aegisthus. This she has done, not from lightmindedness, as Helen, her sister, betrayed Menelaus, but because of the deep hatred she has cherished in her heart on account of the sacrifice of her beloved daughter, Iphigeneia¹. By a trick Iphigeneia was lured from her side and ruthlessly put to death for the sake of her father's ambition, and in league with Aegisthus, who had his own discontents to avenge, she has vowed to lie in wait for her husband whenever he shall return from Ilion, and slay him without pity, as without pity Iphigeneia was slain at Aulis.

The Watchman withdraws into the palace. Signs of movement at once begin to appear, lights are shown, attendants come hurriedly out by twos and threes, they hang garlands on the doors and pillars and images, and are busied in various ways which the Athenians would recognize as the preliminaries of sacrifice. A chant of men's voices is heard and a band of old men, Argive Councillors, who form the *Chorus* of this play, come marching in. Their chant is of the flight of Helen and the weary ten years' war, of the weakness of age which has kept them useless at Argos while the fighting-men are all away at Troy. As they sing, Clytaemnestra the queen glides in and is seen taking part in the preparations. The old men question her of the meaning of what is going on, but she takes no notice, and passes out as silently as she came in. The choral ode then takes a more impassioned tone (we must here call in the analogy of opera, for great part of a Greek play, all the parts which, like this, are choral odes, are sung to a musical accompaniment).² It is now of the fateful augury of Calchas when the fleet was assembled at Aulis; of the anger of Artemis and the terrible means of relief announced by the prophet. The father's awful conflict of mind, when faced with the dread alternative of the ruin of his warlike plans and the

¹ See vol. 1 p. 78

² Professor Blackie plainly contends (*The Lyrical Dramas of Aeschylus*, p. xlvi) that the proper designation of the dramas of Aeschylus is "Sacred Opera, and not Tragedy." All would admit the analogy

sacrifice of his daughter, is feelingly depicted "Sore is the doom, if I obey not ; yet sore, if I shall slay my child, the light of my home, sore if the father's hand must be stained with the maiden's life-blood' Yet how can I wrong the chieftains, my allies, by keeping the fleet at stay Needs must be that of right they vehemently crave this sacrifice, if the shedding of the maiden's blood will free the winds 'Twere better *so*"¹ The whole bitter story—the ruthlessness of the chiefs, the girl's pitiful pleadings for life, the dreadful scene at the altar—is told to the point when the knife is about to fall: "what happened after that I saw not, and I will not tell," they cry But these old counsellors make it clear that in their judgment (as in ours) the sacrifice of Iphigeneia was a sinful act, which may yet bring retribution on the perpetrator. At this point Clytaemnestra enters again and makes known the meaning of the preparations which have excited the wonder of the Council Troy has fallen ! When, half incredulous, the old men ask for proof, the queen describes with vivid imagery how the news has been flashed from Mount Ida to Lemnos, from Lemnos to the summit of Athos, from Athos to Mount Macistus in Euboea, from Euboea to Cithaeron, from Cithaeron to the Arachnaean heights which overlook the plain of Argos It was the blaze on Mount Arachnê which the watchman had seen All this had happened on the night which has just ended

Clytaemnestra withdraws again, and the Chorus break into reflections on the justice of the doom which has fallen on Troy in expiation of the sin of Paris² This leads them to thoughts of the losses suffered by the Argive host through the long years of warfare, and of the discontent which has smouldered among the people, who feel

¹ *Agamemnon*, ll 206-216

² In this Chorus there is a singularly beautiful passage describing Menelaus and Menelaus' empty halls after Helen had fled and left them desolate, lines 410 to 426 (I quote R C Trevelyan's translation)

" Ah home of woe ! Home and woeful princes, wail !
 Ah woeful bed, printed yet with love's embrace !
 Behold the spouse ! Bowed with shame, there he sits apart

that their cruel bereavements have been incurred 'for another man's wife'

A new turn is given to the scene when the Chorus descry the approach of a man dressed in herald's garb and carrying branches of olive in his hand. As he draws near, his war-worn aspect shows that he is from the absent Achaean host. He is seen to throw himself on his knees in ecstasy of joy at once more reaching his native city. He venerates in turn the images of Zeus, Apollo and Hermes, which stand before the palace. Lastly he salutes the palace itself and its altars, then proclaims to his countrymen the victorious homecoming of Agamemnon. Troy has fallen, the rape of Helen has been avenged in bloodshed and ruin. He describes the hardships suffered by the Achaean soldiery on shipboard and camped in the open near the enemy walls, exposed to burning heat in summer, to cold blasts from Mount Ida in the winter. Clytaemnestra now reappears to glory in this confirmation of her own belief in the beacon message, and protest the rectitude of her conduct as wife and queen during Agamemnon's absence. An enquiry about the safety of Menelaus draws from the herald the further news that disaster has overtaken the returning Greeks. Menelaus and his squadron have completely disappeared, the fleet of Agamemnon has suffered shipwreck except only the one ship in which the king and his companions have reached the Argive land. On hearing these disastrous tidings the Chorus return to the theme of Helen and

In silent unreviling grief
For her beyond seas he yearns
Pined with dreams sits he, a sceptred phantom

Hateful now to his mood seems
The grace of loveliest statues
Lost the light of her eyes, and lost
Now that love they enkindled

Anon there come dream-revealed semblances,
Beguiling shapes. Brief the joy, vain the sweet delusion
For vainly, when he seems to view the phantom bliss,
Between his arms, lo ! the vision is flown
And vanishes away beyond recall
On shadowy wings down the paths of slumber "

the curse she has proved to Greeks and Trojans alike. They see here proof of the moral governance of the world: it is not, as the ancients thought, divine jealousy which brings calamity on the prosperous but sin ‘ ‘tis the impious deed which breeds increase of evil, producing ever its like”¹

All at once in the midst of this moralizing the Chorus change their song to a chant of loyal welcome, as they see the king’s slender company approaching a poor remnant of warriors from the storm-tossed fleet². They hail Agamemnon conqueror, and at the same time warn him that all in Argos are not faithful. Agamemnon speaks in reply from the chariot in which he is riding, first with words of gratitude to his country’s gods for victory and safe return. he sees in the destruction of Troy the manifest hand of heaven. It shall be his task now, in concert with his Council, to take measures for the remedying of what is amiss at home. While he is speaking Clytaemnestra comes in followed by a train of her women, with concealed dread and sullen anger in her eyes and words of fulsome welcome on her lips. She stands by the chariot and boldly protests her wifely fidelity, she makes a long story of the unhappy plight of the faithful wife racked with agonies of apprehension through the false reports that come one after another from abroad, haunted by lurking fear of disaffection at home. It is because of

¹ Lines 750-771

² Of course, if the beacon-light signalling the fall of Troy was seen by the Watchman only the night before, it is physically impossible for Agamemnon and his ship’s company to be arriving at the palace *now*, which is next morning. An interval of several days is required for the sacking of Troy, the division of the booty, the embarkation, and the voyage across the Aegean. Yet probably, in their absorption in the action of the play, the spectators were not conscious of any incongruity. Accordingly neither Dr Verrall’s attractively ingenious suggestion that the beacon-watch was a trick, a means devised by Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus for getting early warning of the king’s approach, nor Dr Headlam’s supposition (accepted by Professor Gilbert Murray) of a break at 1 487, a little before the arrival of the Herald, is necessary. Similar inconsistencies are found in Shakespeare’s plays—for instance in the *Merchant of Venice*—and are explained by the theory of “double time,” a real time, and a dramatic. Anyone interested in this problem should see also E. S. Hoernle’s *Problem of the Agamemnon*, Blackwell, 1921.

the fear of domestic sedition that her young son, Orestes, is not with her, but away in Phocis, in the care of his kinsman, Strophius. She invites Agamemnon to enter the palace and with mock flattery declares that his conquering foot must not touch the base earth. At the same time she bids her women spread purple robes on the ground before the palace. Agamemnon accepts the queen's protestations with a cold sarcasm which shows he does not trust her. From her proposal to strew royal purple under his feet he recoils as from an insolent tempting of Providence. Such honours are for the gods alone. He is not an Asiatic despot. Clytaemnestra combats his reluctance with a cunning mixture of persuasion and simulated scorn, and Agamemnon in spite of his suspicions and scruples suffers himself to be persuaded. Yet, to deprecate the nemesis that waits on arrogance, he first orders his sandals to be removed. Then commanding to Clytaemnestra's care his prize of war, the captive princess Cassandra, he descends from his chariot and passes over the purple carpet to his doom.

We here notice that a second chariot follows Agamemnon's and in it Cassandra is standing dressed in the robe and fillet which mark her priestess of Apollo.

The choral ode which follows expresses the uneasy feelings of the Councillors, who dread they know not what. Cassandra meanwhile remains in the chariot still and silent. Now Clytaemnestra comes out, and with insulting tone and gesture orders Cassandra in. When the captive prophetess takes no notice, and does not even seem to hear, she loses patience and withdraws in anger. The leader of the Chorus gently lays a pitying hand upon the stricken woman to waken her from her trance. All at once Cassandra's lips move, and at the sounds that come from them a shiver of horror runs over the theatre most of all because of what the audience know. For Cassandra is that unhappy daughter of Priam loved by Apollo to her undoing. To win her love the god gave her the gift of prophecy, and angered at her denial of the love promised, he laid on her the doom never to be believed.

Now through her prophetic insight she sees with terrible distinctness the murders being prepared within the palace. With sharp cries and bodily shudderings little by little, she makes known to the frightened Councillors her own vision—first as a vague horror, then more and more distinctly. She proves to them her credibility by her uncanny knowledge of dark horrors transacted within that house a generation earlier¹. At length in plain terms she describes the murder of Agamemnon by Clytaemnestra, ‘the lioness couched with the wolf,’ and foretells with shuddering clearness her own bloody death. Then, with a final prophecy of the vengeance which shall hereafter fall on Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus, she goes in, leaving the vast auditorium tense with horrified expectation.

Scarcely have the chorus begun their pious comments, which at this crisis in the action cannot but seem to us inept, when a cry of mortal agony is heard from within, followed almost immediately by a second. The Chorus recognize their king’s voice and know that the murder foretold is in the doing. In helpless agitation and distress they ask each other what is to be done, and while they are still hesitating, the central doors swing open and a square platform is thrust out on which may be seen, like a moving tableau, the tall figure of Clytaemnestra, splashed with blood, and in her hands the axe with which she has killed Agamemnon. At her feet, half hidden in a bath-like vessel, is the body of the king entangled in a mesh of heavy material,² with the dead Cassandra on the ground beside him.

Clytaemnestra speaks there is no remorse, or shame, or fear, in her utterance, only exultation. She boldly

¹ Atreus and Thyestes were sons of Pelops. Thyestes seduced his brother’s wife, Atreus, after a pretended reconciliation invited Thyestes to a banquet and served up to him the flesh of two of his sons, which the unhappy father ate without knowing. Aegisthus was a third son of Thyestes, brother of the murdered boys.

² Mr Sheppard holds that this was a sleeveless bath robe, wrapped in which, when once it was over his head, Agamemnon was powerless to move. Aeschylus very definitely compares the contrivance used to a fisherman’s net, but the comparison may be figurative only.

avows deep and irreconcilable hatred of her husband, and glories in the cunning plot by which she has compassed his death. She enacts the murder before the shocked eyes of the Chorus and a new tremor of horror runs through the theatre at her words

I struck him twice two cries escaped his lips,
And all his limbs were loosed As he lay prone
I gave him a third blow, service of grace
To Hades, the safe-keeper of the dead ¹

The old men at first almost speechless with horror, at length find voice to denounce the crime and threaten the murderer with punishment. Unmoved Clytaemnestra justifies herself. The man she has slain was the murderer of his own daughter, the child of her love and pain, the insolent flaunting of his captive Cassandra was an insult not to be forgiven. In a wild chant the Chorus cry out upon the curse which pursues the House of Atreus. Clytaemnestra takes this word from them, she accepts for herself the rôle of the Avenger, but prays with sudden vehemence that with the vengeance now by her accomplished the curse may pass away. At this point Aegisthus arrives, an armed band of partisans with him. He gloats over the death of Agamemnon, professing to see in it a just requital of the shocking crime of Atreus against Thyestes. The Chorus rebuke him, call him coward and threaten him with death by stoning. Aegisthus stung to fury orders his bodyguard to use their weapons, the old Councillors carry arms too, and it seems for a moment that more bloodshed must ensue. But Clytaemnestra interposes with counsels of moderation. There has been bloodshed enough. She and Aegisthus have all the power now, the old men's reproaches and taunts do not matter.

Nay, these idle yelpings hold thou lightly, let them howl their fill,
Thou and I together now may rule the kingdom as we will

With these words the first drama of the tetralogy comes to an end. There is no curtain to fall or rise,

¹ *Agam* ll. 1384-87

merely the actors withdraw and the Chorus moves off in solemn procession as it had entered

The Interval.—A great sigh of relief passes over the auditorium, and the pent-up feelings of the audience find expression. Not that an Athenian audience is particularly self-restrained. On the contrary it is accustomed to express its feelings with lively vigour. Sentiments which appeal to it are vigorously applauded, sometimes 'encored', and unpopular actors are known to have been hissed off the stage. But to-day something impressive in the subject and treatment has kept them unusually quiet, and now that tension is relaxed, tongues wag and cramped limbs are stretched. There is much peeling of oranges and cracking of nuts for an Athenian audience is very human (even grossly so) and the scene in essentials is not unlike the gallery of a London theatre on Boxing-Day. But the interval does not last long, and all are back in their places when the trumpet rings out a second time and Aeschylus' second play, the *Libation-bearers*, is announced.

The Choephoroe.—The scene is again before the Palace at Argos,¹ but on the right there now rises a mound crowned with a tall slab of stone, which represents the tomb of Agamemnon. Two young men enter, one a youth on the verge of manhood, the other a little older. The younger man approaches the tomb, kneels and lays beneath the tombstone one of two long tresses of curling hair which he is carrying. His words make known that he is Orestes, and that his purpose in coming is to avenge his father's murder (Enough time, then, must have elapsed since Agamemnon's death to allow his son, who was at that time but a boy, to grow to manhood.) While he is still kneeling, the sound of women's singing is heard. Orestes notes that the singers are dressed in mourning colours and wonders what this may signify. Can they be coming to make expiatory offerings at the dead man's

¹ Argos is put for Mycenae in these plays by a convention. Mycenae itself had been sacked and left desolate by the Argives four years before the date of the trilogy (see vol. 1 p. 17).

tomb ? It would be strange if it were so, considering who now reigns in Argos but he thinks he discerns among these women his sister Electra, though it is many years since he was sent away from Argos a mere boy. He calls to his companion, Pylades, to stand aside, and watch what happens

The singers (who form the Chorus of the play) are handmaids of the palace, once free women of Troy but brought to Argos as captives by Agamemnon. Years have passed, and now, out of hatred for Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus they are personally devoted to Electra, and to Orestes the rightful heir to the kingdom. From this wild and mournful song the audience gather that Clytaemnestra, in spite of her stern spirit and obstinate impetuosity, has been terrified by a dream which seems to her to signify some brooding menace from the angry ghost of her murdered husband. For this reason she has sent Electra with these women to make placatory offerings¹ at the tomb of Agamemnon, for this is a rite which with all her boldness she dare not herself perform. Orestes then has guessed rightly, Electra is with the women, and words she addresses to them show him that she is in doubt how to discharge the strange duty laid upon her. As she stands by the tomb, she starts and cries out. She has seen with bewilderment the long lock of hair which Orestes has placed there. Whose can it be ? Only some member of the family of Atreus could make such an offering. It cannot be Aegisthus or Clytaemnestra. *Can it be Orestes ?* She notes the colour and texture of the hair, and is agonized with hope and uncertainty. Then she notices footprints made in the sand. Whoever made the offering has but recently left the tomb. *Can it be Orestes ?* Is he even now somewhere near at hand, braced for his mission of vengeance ? At this moment Orestes himself comes forward and declares himself. Electra is at first incredulous. Slowly conviction comes to her as Orestes persists in his story and

¹ It is from these offerings, or libations, that the drama takes its name

shows to her in further proof a piece of needlework which Electra recognizes as her own, a gift of long ago to her brother. For some moments brother and sister give way to wild joy then are recalled to a sense of reality and their present danger. They must contrive with swift boldness and cunning so that their plot may succeed, and the murderers be slain even as they slew. But first they proceed to the performance of the expiatory rites for which Electra and her women have come. It is a weird scene which follows steeped in superstitions which still survived among the Athenians of the fifth century. For it is all very real and significant to them. Orestes and Electra call on the spirit of their dead father with vehement insistence, protesting their orphaned state, recalling the foul treachery by which Agamemnon died, the ignominy of his fate. It is a long-drawn and passionate scene. At last the rites are fully accomplished, though to very different purport from that intended by Clytaemnestra. For all its meaning is concentrated into a savage cry for the safe execution of Orestes' purpose of vengeance. This done, Orestes and Electra discuss more quietly their plans. Orestes and Pylades will gain entrance into the palace disguised as travellers from Phocis, and if but for a moment Orestes finds himself face to face with his enemy, Aegisthus is as good as dead. Electra and her women will help by their silence and by timely speech, as occasion may require. Orestes and Pylades leave the scene, and the Chorus sing another ode.

As the song ends Orestes and Pylades reappear in their disguise as Phocian strangers, and Orestes boldly knocks at the palace gates. A slave challenges from within, Orestes answers that he brings news and is in haste to tell it to someone in authority. Clytaemnestra herself then comes out and proffers hospitality to the strangers. The pretended visitor from Phocis tells her that Orestes is dead. He has been charged by Strophius the Phocian to deliver this message. The queen, who has no suspicion who the Phocian stranger is, dissembles her sense of relief at this release from a dread that has been heavy

upon her since her dream—the dread of her son's return as his father's avenger. She pretends to be overwhelmed with sorrow. But as this is no fault of the messenger, she promises him all the customary hospitality of the palace and orders her servants to conduct both strangers to the men's apartments. She herself follows them in. After a very short interval an old woman comes out. This is Kilissa, once Orestes' nurse and devoted to him. She is charged with a message to Aegisthus. The Chorus question her of its purport, and hearing that her errand is to summon him to the palace together with his body-guard, they adjure her to contrive that Aegisthus comes unattended and alone. The old woman gives her promise and hastens on her way. The Chorus pour out impassioned prayers for Orestes' success. As they conclude, Aegisthus enters. After a few words which veil his jubilant feelings at the news from Phocis, he goes in. Immediately after, his death cry is heard for Orestes wastes no time but cuts him down as soon as they meet. A slave rushes out, calling for help. Now we reach the climax of the play. Clytaemnestra returns to learn the reason of this outcry, and guessing the meaning of the danger calls for the axe, the fatal weapon with which she had slain Agamemnon. But before it is brought Orestes appears, the dripping sword in his hand, and mother and son are face to face. "You also am I seeking *he is well sped*," cries Orestes. Disguise no longer hides from Clytaemnestra the dreadful reality. Her son is come indeed as the avenger of blood to slay his mother for the murder of his father. For all her bravery Clytaemnestra pleads for mercy, appealing to the soft ties of nature which bind mother and child. For a moment Orestes hesitates. Then, and then only, Pylades speaks. His words are few but decisive.

What then of thy sworn oath and the command
Spoken by Loxias from Pytho's shrine?

Oh! make mankind thine enemy, not the gods ¹

The audience has heard already from Orestes' lips the fearful duty laid upon him by the Delphic oracle on pain

¹ *Choephoroe*, 900-902

of outlawry during life and damnation after death. They know that thus reminded he dare not shrink, and again a thrill of awe runs through the theatre as Orestes sword in hand, leads his mother away.

The slaying of Clytaemnestra is done out of sight of the audience, but as in the *Agamemnon* the bodies of the king and Cassandra were shown lying in death, so now by the same device we see the bodies of Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra, and Orestes standing by them, his sword still reeking with his mother's blood. The Chorus exult in the accomplishment of a divinely appointed retribution and the deliverance of Argos from the tyranny of the usurpers. But Orestes is human. He has killed his own mother. He was driven to it by what seemed the express mandate of heaven. But the struggle of conflicting impulses has been agonizing, and now at the moment of accomplishment he realizes the appalling nature of his act. His reason begins to give way already he seems to see the shadowy forms of the grim divinities, avengers of slain kinsfolk, whom the Athenians euphemistically call the *Eumenides*, the Gracious, or Kindly, Ones, fearing to utter their true name, *Erinyes*. The women of the Chorus try to reassure him, praise his daring deed, call him the most faithful son father ever had. But Orestes finds no comfort in their assurances. They do not see what he sees—the spectral shapes of the Avenging Furies. He dare not stay. He must seek escape by flight, his one hope to find purification and protection at the shrine of Apollo, by whose express command the unnatural deed of blood was done. The Chorus pray for his safe-keeping and deliverance, as he hurries away. Then they march out to a solemn chant recounting the successive woes of the House of Atreus, the banquet of Thyestes, the murder of Agamemnon, and now this great act of retributive justice the end of which is veiled from them as yet.

The Third Play of the Trilogy.—There has been much speculation in Athens about the third and concluding drama of the trilogy. It is known to take its name from the terrible supernatural beings whose presence was just

hinted in the last scene of the *Choephoroe*. A good deal more is known among Aeschylus' friends and in literary circles, and rumour has it that the poet's treatment of the subject is novel and powerful. It is said that the Areopagus is brought into it, and that is felt to be a delicate subject. For in recent years a fierce political struggle has centred in the Council of the Areopagus.¹ The extremer democratic party—of which, since the assassination of Ephialtes, Pericles is head—was for its total abolition. A conservative minority had fought hard for the maintenance of all its privileges, bound up as these were with much that was venerable and glorious in their city's past. The outcome of the strife had been a compromise. The Areopagus had been deprived of its political influence and of a large part of its judicial powers, it had kept its jurisdiction in cases of homicide. a result with which the defeated conservative party were little content. Expectation about this third drama of Aeschylus' trilogy was accordingly general and keen.

The Eumenides.—When the interval was over and the *Eumenides* announced as before by herald, the scene was no longer Argos, but the Temple of Apollo at Delphi. The Pythia, Apollo's priestess, is standing on the stylobate of the temple, and before entering to perform her appointed duties, invokes in succession the deities believed to have possessed sanctuaries on the site before Apollo,² then Apollo himself, Pallas Athena, Dionysus, the nymphs of the Corycian Cave, the streams of Pleistus, Poseidon, and Zeus, praying for a blessing on her ministry. She then enters the temple; but immediately on her entry we hear a startled cry and at once she comes out again in great perturbation. While she is describing what she has seen the central doors once more open and to our surprise reveal the radiant form of Apollo.³ With him is Hermes, his brother, easily known by the wand he carries and the symbolic wings attached to his sandals. In the back-

¹ Vol. 1 p. 239

² These were Gaia (Earth), Themis and Phœbē

³ This point also I owe to Mr. Sheppard.

ground we can discern clinging to the altar that stands in the inmost shrine the figure of a man (and we see at once it is Orestes), with a suppliant's wreath of olive round his brows, and in his hands, which drip with blood, a drawn sword. Around him outstretched in sleep he dim grisly shapes like women, yet hideously unlike women. Apollo speaks, promising protection to Orestes and deliverance at the last, but bidding him now flee, while the Erinyes, put to sleep for a time, are powerless to harm him. He is to seek fresh sanctuary in the temple of Athena at Athens. His cause shall there be tried by fit judges. At this Orestes leaves the altar and departs accompanied by Hermes, to whose guiding care he is committed by Apollo. Apollo withdraws also.

As soon as all these are gone the phantom form of Clytaemnestra appears and seeks to rouse the Furies from their sleep. This is no easy matter, since the sleep into which they have been thrown by Apollo is deep. At first they respond only with blood-curdling muttering and moaning. The cries they utter in their sleep show that, like hunting-dogs, they are dreaming of the chase. One by one they awake, and finding their victim escaped raise furious outcry, which takes shape as a wild ode, for in this play the Erinyes themselves are the Chorus. They assail Apollo with reproaches for baulking them of their prey and denounce the usurpation of the 'younger gods'. Upon this Apollo reappears and with opprobrious words drives them out of his temple. The Erinyes do not venture to resist Apollo in his own temple, but they boldly affirm against him their right to wreak their will on the slayer of his mother. They vow never to give up the pursuit till they have hounded Orestes down.

The scene now changes to Athens. A few simple arrangements convert the Temple of Apollo at Delphi into the Temple of Athena on the Acropolis. In the centre the audience recognize the familiar image of Athena¹ and this Orestes is seen to be clasping. He has just reached

¹ Not of course a Pheidian Athena, but some ruder and more ancient image.

sanctuary in time, with the Furies hot upon his track. The first words spoken are Orestes' appeal to Athena for protection. He comes to her at the bidding of Apollo, he claims that through his wanderings and sufferings he has already in part made atonement. He is no longer the bloodstained outlaw from human society, but by ritual purification has now been admitted back into fellowship with mankind. He has come to Athena's temple to abide judgment of his guilt or innocence. As he is speaking the Erinyes enter in their most terrifying aspect, serpents hissing in their hair, their wild blood-lust unappeased. At first they do not see Orestes, but snuffle around seeking him like questing hounds. Presently one of the monsters sees him and with terrifying yells the whole troop gather round, pointing at him, claiming him as their victim and gloating over the agonies he must soon suffer. Undismayed Orestes answers that the blood that stained his hands is now washed away by the cleansing rites performed over him at Delphi. He cries to Athena for succour and protection, and the words he uses thrill every Athenian and Argive in the theatre, for he vows that in days to come the Argive land and people shall be the faithful allies of Athens (glancing skilfully at the league of amity which now unites the Athenian and Argive peoples). The Erinyes, stung to fiercer rage at this defiance, circle round Orestes in fantastic dance, shrieking out threats, calling on Night, their mother, to bear witness to the dishonour done to them by Apollo, chanting the inexorable law of the penalty of blood-guiltiness with a weird refrain which falls on the ear with piercing iteration.

"Over the victim doomed
 Sing we our chant, driving men mad,
 Driving to frenzy, searing the heart,
 This is the hymn that we sing,
 Blasting the hearts of men,
 Tuneless, yet strong to bind" ¹

Their task may be abhorred by gods and men yet they hold it of indefeasible right by a law of the universe

¹ *Eumenides*, 328-33 and (repeated) 341-6

The ordinance by which they exercise their dread office is god-given and none may take from them the reverence due

Athena now appears and enquires the reason of these cries which have summoned her from the Trojan land, where the victorious Achaeans have assigned to her and her people, the Athenians, a goodly portion of the conquered land ¹ The Furies point to Orestes as one doomed to punishment for the murder of his mother Athena refuses to condemn him without hearing his defence The Furies offer to submit their claim to her judgment as arbitrator Athena cannot (she explains) give judgment on this dispute herself, but she undertakes to choose judges from among her Athenian people and constitute a court, which shall thenceforward be established for all time A choral ode follows which rises gradually into majestic affirmation of the law of righteousness ²

The scene shifts a second time we are no longer on the Acropolis, but on the Areopagus ³ Athena ushers in twelve citizens of Athens who are to act as judges, and

¹ The audience would recognize with pleasure this covert allusion to the Athenian claim to the Thracian Chersonese (Gallipoli), where in one form or another Athens had been in possession since before the Persian wars, when the family of Miltiades had ruled a small principality there

² *Eumenides*, ll 538-543 and 550-557

“ Never then forget thou this
Reverence the throne of Right
Let not gain
Tempt thee to spurn and abase it with impious foot ,
Else punishment follows ,
Biding till its time be ripe ”

“ Whoso is just willingly without constraint ,
Shall not fail to prosper ,
Nor ever sink , whelmed in utter ruin
But he who dares , bold in sin , to carry freight
Of wealth unjustly swept together from all sides ,
In due time perforce shall haul his sail down ,
When on the labouring boat the storm
Bursts , and the yard is breaking ”

(R C Trevelyan's translation, p 137)

³ The Areopagus (Mars' Hill) is the low hill (375 ft) N W of the Acropolis, just across the dip below the Propylaea.

declares that the Court of the Areopagus, thus instituted, shall continue for ever. The Furies are there as accusers, Orestes is the accused. Apollo is present as witness for the defence. Athena presides and invites the Erinyes to open the case. They charge Orestes with matricide. Orestes admits the fact, but pleads justification. He did indeed slay his mother, Clytaemnestra, but it was as the divinely authorized avenger of blood, because she had murdered Agamemnon, her husband, Orestes' father, and he appeals to Apollo in confirmation of his plea. Thus appealed to, Apollo vindicates the authority of his oracle, declaring that no response is ever delivered from his prophetic shrine, which is not ordained by Zeus, father and king of the Olympians. It was the heinous character of Clytaemnestra's crime, the guileful and treacherous trapping and doing to a shameful death of the war-leader who should have been protected by the veneration due to his office, that makes Orestes' act, not only justifiable, but necessary. The Furies press on their side the enormity of the presence in a righteous community of one stained with his own mother's blood. Apollo retorts with fresh arguments and then the newly-created Areopagites are called upon to pronounce judgment according to their oath. Athena once more proclaims that the Court now about to pronounce judgment shall remain an Athenian institution under the title of the Council of the Areopagus. If the Athenians preserve and reverence it, she promises they shall find it a bulwark and glory of their land, such as no other race of men possesses,

“ Pure from corruption, reverend, quick to wrath,

A vigilant guardian of the land's repose ” ¹

This said, she charges the judges to record their votes, adding that should the votes prove equal, the accused is to be held acquitted. The Areopagites come up, one by one, and throw the tablet inscribed with their votes into

¹ *Eumenides*, 704-6 (Trevelyan)

an urn. A count shows that the votes are equally balanced, six against six: therefore Orestes is acquitted. Orestes offers fervent thanks to Athena. but the Erinyes are vehement in their outcry against the verdict. Athena endeavours to soothe them, promising that a shrine in their honour shall be consecrated by the Athenians under the Acropolis. For a long while the Furies only repeat their laments and denunciations, refusing to be appeased. But at length they give way before Athena's calm and patient insistence and allow themselves to be persuaded. In the end they accept with manifest satisfaction the honours in perpetuity offered to them at Athens. Henceforth they will dwell in a cavern beneath the Areopagus, to be worshipped there with peculiar honour as the Holy Goddesses. They promise on their part to protect the crops and fruit-trees in Attica from storm and blight, and to bless the flocks with increase. Better than that, they will safeguard the children of the land from untimely death and from the curse of civic strife. Their angry upbraiding change to friendly greetings, which are answered with glad friendliness by Athena on behalf of the City. A procession is formed to conduct the goddesses to their new abode under the Areopagus and a solemn chant is raised:

“ Come to your home, Great ones high in honour,
 Daughters of Night, our loving train attends you
 Speak good words and guarded, people of this land !
 Lo, 'neath the earth in your pramaeval grotto
 Sacrifice and worship shall be yours for ever
 Speak good words and guarded, people one and all !
 Gracious to our land and righteous-minded
 Come, Holy Maidens, deign to be well-pleased
 While the flashing torches light your way.
 Let the exultant triumph-song ring out.”

To the strains of this processional hymn all move away, and so with reconciliation and rejoicing Aeschylus' great trilogy ends.

The ‘ satyrical drama ’ which followed was called the Proteus. We may guess with some probability that it dealt with the wanderings of Menelaus (as described in

Book IV of the *Odyssey*), since an adventure with Proteus is one of the episodes,¹ but this is all we can know, and that it necessarily dealt with the story in a burlesque manner. for that was the fashion of the satyric drama.²

Moral Purport of the Oresteia.—We have enough, I think, in common with fifth century Athens to make us follow these three plays with interest, though there is much in them to which we cannot respond with the same intensity of feeling as the Athenians themselves. But while it is possible to tell the story in English, it is not at all possible to tell it with the splendour of Aeschylus' language. To appreciate this splendour is not even for everyone who can read Greek on the contrary a chorus of Aeschylus requires for its mere understanding a high degree of scholarship.³ As an appreciation of Milton has been said to be "the last reward of consummated scholarship,"⁴ so it might be said of an appreciation of Aeschylus' Greek. The grandeur of the thought is, however, to be reached in English, and there are several more than adequate translations.⁵ As we read we see unfolded before us a sublime spectacle of human passion and crime, the moral significance of which is forcibly impressed upon us. Manifestly this trilogy of dramas deals with the problem of evil, of sin and the punishment of sin. The whole might be deemed an illustration in action of the eastern saying, "because evil produces evil, therefore it is to be shunned more than fire." Thyestes sins, and his sin provokes the vengeance of Atreus. The crime of Atreus is repeated in the sin of Agamemnon, and that sin entails the vengeance of Clytaemnestra. Clytaemnestra's sin

¹ See vol 1 pp 141-2 Two lines of the *Proteus* survive as a fragment of Aeschylus' (210), but give us no clue to the mode of treatment

² We have only one complete surviving satyric drama to judge by, Euripides' *Cyclops*, revived for performance at Cambridge in the summer of 1923

³ "How many 'varsity dons,'" asks Mr E S Hoernle, "who do not happen to have studied Aeschylus, could read him 'unseen'?"

⁴ Mark Pattison, *Milton*, p 215

⁵ See *Note on Books*, below p 1

leads on to the matricide of Orestes and that makes him the victim of the avenging Erinyes. But here we come up against a new principle, Orestes is saved and healed by the mediation of Apollo and Athena, two of the most ethically conceived deities of the Hellenic Pantheon. This new principle is the inner purpose of Aeschylus' drama. We have in it a conflict of moralities, an old and a new. The ancient traditional morality of Athens is just the *lex talionis*, 'reprisals,'—an eye for an eye, blood for blood. It is this ancient law, conceived almost as a law of the universe, which the Erinyes represent, the law that killing inexorably and implacably entails the punishment of death. Aeschylus has had vision of a higher law, a law which admits of bloodless expiation, of reconciliation, even of mercy. The Erinyes argue that if their iron law is relaxed, if the slayer can ever be held justified, there is an end of all moral sanctions. Murder will riot in its most abhorrent forms, fathers and mothers, done to death by their own children, will learn too late how dangerous it is to tamper with the primordial sanctions. Apollo and Athena stand for a more enlightened dispensation which discriminates between crime and *crime*, and admits the possibility of justification. Orestes is purified from the blood-guilt which made him an outlaw from human society, pursued by demons, and the curse comes to an end.

That certain families are pursued by an hereditary curse, which the Greeks called *Atê* (Mischief), is a doctrine which meets us more than once amongst the legends on which the tragic poets drew. Aeschylus exhibits in these plays how this 'curse' is no arbitrary fatalistic 'Mischief' from which there is no escape, but error, preventable human error, repeated from generation to generation, through individual acts of wickedness for which the doer is morally responsible. The disposition, indeed, which leads to misjudgment through faults of character may be hereditary—headstrong self-will, ungoverned wrath, lust of conquest or of pleasure. The very same tendency, amounting to an hereditary curse, is traceable—in less

violent forms—in family histories still, and is explicable by the same causes Families are ruined by errors of character, slight perhaps in themselves, yet cumulative in their effects, which repeat themselves in one generation after another To our own age as to fifth-century Athens the lesson is the same *Sophrosuné*, sane-mindedness, moderation, balanced self-control, is best, and to observe the commonly accepted laws of righteousness These dramas of Aeschylus have in them that which impressively drives home these truths.

2 A COMEDY OF 421 B.C

“ His Comedy is the old Comedy, his poet is Aristophanes ”
W. P. KER, *The Art of Poetry*, p 134.

It is a curious change from drama of this solemn character to Aristophanic comedy But the afternoons were, as we have said, given to the performance of comedy, and when the four plays of the tragic tetralogy were played out, there would be one of the year's competing comedies on the same stage and before the same audience We have no comedy of the year 458 B.C. The only complete comedies that have come down to us are Aristophanes', and the earliest of these surviving comedies of Aristophanes is *The Acharnians*, performed in B.C. 425. We may, however, complete our representation of a day in the Theatre of Dionysus by exhibiting one of Aristophanes' comedies much as we have exhibited the *Orestea*, and we will take for this purpose Aristophanes' *Peace*, the comedy performed in the year 421, partly because we have quoted from it already (p 173), partly because still in this year 1924 the subject has shrewd interest for us

The Circumstances at Athens.—In the year 421 both the Athenians and most of the Peloponnesians were thoroughly tired of the war, which had then been going on for ten years. The Athenians were in possession of Pylos and of Cythera; but on the other hand, they had met with humiliating defeat at Delium Moreover, their treasury

was depleted Cleon, the leader of the war party at Athens, and Brasidas, the most enterprising leader the war had produced on the Peloponnesian side, were both dead (above, p 172) Early in 421 the Peace of Nicias was being negotiated, and while success was still in the balance, the Dionysia were celebrated at Athens and Aristophanes competed with *The Peace* We shall find an Athenian comedy, except for its spirit of rollicking drollery, which is independent of time limits and makes the whole world kin, even less like any form of drama of our own day than were Aeschylus' tragedies.¹

Outline of Aristophanes' "Peace."—The play opens with a dialogue between two slaves of a farmer named Trygaeus, who in his longing for peace has formed the desperate resolve to get to heaven and expostulate with Zeus for allowing such a ruinous war to go on To effect this purpose he has been feeding up a huge beetle on whose back he means to fly up into the air and make his way to Heaven The beetle is an ordinary dung beetle of vast size, and much unsavoury fun is made of the unsavoury food which it is the slaves' task to supply to the beast. The feeding over, one of these servants peeps through the doors of the court-yard and sees his master already mounted and preparing to start At this point the doors of the court-yard are thrown open and Trygaeus is disclosed, astride on his beetle beginning to rise into the air. The poor man is plainly nervous and is trying to quiet his steed with soothing words, "Softly, softly, my beastie!"² The servants try to stop him, his little daughters run out and beseech him not to leave them, but all in vain Trygaeus refuses to listen, although his language shows him to be divided between the desire to soar heavenward and fear of coming a cropper Suddenly the scene changes and Trygaeus is seen to be alighting in

¹ And yet the kinship with *The Beggar's Opera* and modern musical comedy generally is fairly obvious In artistic aim and efficacy the musical comedies of Gilbert and Sullivan offer the nearest parallel See also ch xv p 439 below

² Aristophanes, *Peace*, l 82 and foll

Heaven. The mechanical means by which this is effected is sufficiently simple. A broad platform is thrust out from the back scene just under the beetle and Trygaeus as they hang in the air, and on this steed and rider come to rest. New scenery at the back of the platform represents the palace of Zeus, in front of it is a pile of great stones, which we are later to learn covers the mouth of a cavern.

Trygaeus knocks boldly at the palace door, and this brings out Hermes, who is employed as Hall-porter. In this capacity Hermes shows himself, like any pampered house-porter of the day,¹ truculent and abusive, till bribed by a present, when he becomes quite friendly. But it appears that Trygaeus' desire to see Zeus cannot be gratified, for all the gods, except only Hermes, have gone away to the top of Heaven's dome (Hermes being left as care-taker) in disgust at the endless bickerings of the Hellenes, and War has occupied the palace in their place. When Trygaeus enquires of the reason for all this Hermes replies.

“Because you *would* have war, when oftentimes
They were for peace. If the Laconian folk
Had just a bit the better, they would say
“Yea, by the Twin Gods! Now shall Athens smart!”
While if victorious Athens had th’ advantage
And the Laconians came to ask for peace,
You always said at once ‘We are being cheated!
Don’t, don’t for Heaven’s sake give way to them
They’ll come again, if only we keep Pylos!’”²

And Trygaeus is obliged to admit “Yes that’s the very way we used to talk.” He is further admonished that the Hellenes are never likely to see the face of Peace again: for she has now been imprisoned by War in a deep pit “Where?” asks Trygaeus. “Right below us here,” answers Hermes.

“And don’t you see
The big stones he has piled about the mouth
To stop your rescuing her. . .”³

How dire is this peril for all Hellas is soon shown by the appearance of War himself carrying a gigantic mortar,

¹ See above, ch. xi p. 294

² Lines 211-20

³ Lines 224-6

in which he intends to pound up the Greek city-states War is seen throwing into his mortar leeks, garlic, cheese, and honey (these ingredients representing Prasiae in Laconia, Megara Sicily, and Attica) By good luck he has not at the moment a pestle handy—since he only ‘moved in’ yesterday. but he sends his boy *Havoc* to fetch one Havoc has no success For the Athenian pestle, ‘the leather-seller who embroiled all Hellas,’¹ is lost and the Lacedaemonian is not to be had either For that was lent to people in the Thraceward regions and there lost² So War must put off his pounding, till he has had time to make himself one He goes indoors to do this Trygaeus at once sees his chance he catches at this delay in the hope of saving Hellas He cries out

“ Now have we, men of Hellas, a fair chance
 To free ourselves of war and tribulation
 By drawing Peace out—Peace so dear to us all—
 Before we’re hindered by another pestle
 Come farmers, merchants, craftsmen and artisans ,
 Come settlers from abroad , come foreigners ;
 Come men of the Islands—oh come one and all !
 Bring levers, shovels, ropes, and hither speed
 Now is our chance to snatch the better luck we need ! ”³

This appeal brings on the Chorus (for Comedy requires a chorus no less than Tragedy), Athenian farmers of the deme Athmon, but treated as representing all the Hellenes suffering from the miseries of war They hurry in, eager to haul Peace up to the light of day ‘with cranes and levers,’ Peace “the greatest of all the gods and goddesses and the most vineyard-loving” They are so excited at the prospect of recovering Peace and make such a noise that Trygaeus fears they will wake War up They begin to move the stones, Trygaeus taking the lead This provokes vigorous remonstrances from Hermes , he tells them that Zeus has denounced death upon anyone found digging Peace out With some difficulty, by prayers, promises, cajoleries and the gift of a gold cup, he is

¹ Line 270 , meaning Cleon, killed at Amphipolis , see p 172 above

² Brasidas lines 283 and 4

³ Lines 292-300

prevailed upon to assist instead of opposing. The stones are rolled away, ropes are adjusted and the word is given to pull, there is a shouting and a straining as all haul on the ropes. Long they pull away without making any progress. Hermes incites the Chorus to effort, like 'a coach' handling a tug-of-war team. "Pull," he cries, "now, now" But still no progress is made. Some of the Hellenes are pulling half-heartedly, or not pulling at all. The Boeotians are merely pretending the Argives not pretending even. The Laconians are pulling like men, they want their prisoners back from Pylos. The Megarians, starved and ravenous as they are, are pulling askew. Presently Hermes bursts out.

" You men of Megara, confound you all !
 Hateful you are to Peace, when she remembers
 How you were first to drive her into strife.
 And you Athenians, I bid you cease
 Pulling awry as you are doing now
 Why you do nothing else but go to law !
 But if you really mean to draw Peace out,
 Shift your ground somewhat nearer to the sea."

Chorus

" Come, you who are on the land, let's take the job and do it."

Hermes

" Yes, now that's better far, stick to it, now you're gaining "

Chorus.

" He says we're doing better now, cheer up and pull together."

Trygaeus

" My word ! It's those who till the ground, and no one else who's doing it ! "

Chorus.

" Heave and haul, one and all,
 Pull all of you together now !
 Don't get slack, but put your back
 Well into it ! Now you'll do it !
 Now, boys, now . see here she comes !
 Heave and haul, one and all !
 Heave, heave, heave, heave, heave, heave,
 With a yeo-heave-ho, together oh ! " ¹

At last the head and shoulders of a colossal Peace appear out of the aperture representing the opening into

¹ Lines 500-519

the cavern and from beside her step out on to the orchestra two comely maidens, her attendants, whom the poet calls Opôra and Theória "Good morning, Opôra," cries Trygaeus, "good morning, Theória"

"O what a charming face you have, Theória!"¹

and he kisses her. He now indulges in happy visions of all the joys which Peace is bringing back with her

"Ivy, the wine-vat, little bleating lambs,
Full-bosomed matrons trotting off to the fields,
The merry maid, the jar turned upside down,
And heaps of other blessings. . . ."²

The Chorus join in this welcome to Peace and to the prospect she brings of a happy return to the vineyards and fruit-trees they have so long been parted from :

"Hail blest day so long desired by true-hearted husbandmen,
In my gladness I would hasten to behold my vines again,
And the fig-trees that I planted, when I still was but a boy.
After long, long years of absence I would fain salute with joy."³

Trygaeus revels in thoughts of an early return to his farm and as we listen to his raptures we realize more clearly what it had been to the peasants of Attica to leave their homesteads and huddle into the City.

"Oh to think of it, my comrades,
That old happy way of living
Which Peace once bestowed upon us !
All the delicate confections—
Figs and myrtles, and the sweetness
Of dried grapes ; and beds of violets
Clustered all about the well !
Come, let's welcome her who brings
All these dear, desired things !

Best beloved and most longed for, all that's best to thee we owe,
We who soothly all life long
Live and work the fields among,
Thee, dear lady, thee alone
Our best benefactress own "⁴

How was it that Peace had so long hidden her face from the Hellenes ? Why was she so angered with the

¹ Line 524.

² Lines 535-8.

³ Lines 556-9

⁴ Lines 571-591

Athenians? Hermes tells us Peace herself is too deeply offended with the Athenians even to speak to them, but she whispers to Hermes, and he reports what she says ¹

“ This then is why she holds you all to blame .
When she came, after that affair of Pylos,
With a whole sheaf of treaties with her, *you*
Voted against her thrice in the Assembly.” ²

Peace on her part, asks for news of city matters, and Aristophanes works in ridicule of the coward Cleonymus, and of Hyperbolus the lampseller, popular favourite since Cleon's death, of Cratinus, the bibulous comic poet—even of Sophocles! And now Hermes gives Opôra in marriage to Trygaeus and destines Theôria to be the bride of the Council. Trygaeus, enraptured, proposes to go home at once and looks about for his redoubtable beetle. The beetle, however, has disappeared. Hermes explains

“ Harnessed in Zeus' car he carries lightnings ” ³

a line quoted in derision from Euripides. The problem of how to get back to earth is nevertheless soon solved by Hermes' pointing out an easy passage down through the cavern

At this point there is a pause in the action, the Chorus come forward and deliver what is known as the *Para-basis*. This so-called parabasis, which means expressly the ‘coming-forward,’ forms a recognized part of Athenian comedy in the fifth century. It was by old-established custom the poet's opportunity to address the audience in his own person, and in this parabasis we hear Aristophanes claiming that he has done much to raise the character of Athenian comedy, putting true wit in the place of vulgar buffoonery. While this is going on the scene changes back to Athens and the house of Trygaeus. Trygaeus himself has just got back to the surprise and delight of his servants, who

¹ The real reason why Peace does not herself speak is that she is represented by a colossal head only, and there is no actor taking a part for her. The number of actors permissible is limited in Comedy as well as in Tragedy

² Lines 664-7

³ Line 722

listen eagerly to the story of his adventures. Opôra is introduced as his bride-elect and is led into the house to be dressed for the wedding. The rest of the performance is mainly taken up with the details of a sacrificial offering to be made on the inauguration of peace. What shall the offering be? A simple pot of vegetables is too mean. A stall-fed ox, a great fat pig? Neither is a suitable offering to Peace. It must be a 'baa-lamb' because that should conduce to a lamb-like frame of mind in the sacrificer. At last all is ready, the basket, the wreath, the sacrificial knife and the pan of sacred fire. We are now to be witnesses of a solemn sacrifice in fifth-century Athens, and may note the preliminaries. First Xanthias, one of Trygaeus' servants, paces round the altar from left to right, carrying the basket and lustral water to sanctify it. Next Trygaeus snatches a blazing torch from the altar-fire and dips it in the water. This is to sanctify the water. Then water from the dripping torch is sprinkled over the victim's head: the object is to make the victim shake its head and so seem to assent to its own death. Barley is brought in a basin: the slave washes his hands, then scatters the barley over the audience. It is at this point that the prayer to Peace quoted on p. 173 comes in. The knife is presented to Trygaeus, but at the last moment he has a scruple. No blood-sacrifice at all may be made to Peace. So the victim is spared. Jokes of all kinds are interposed throughout all this, and now comes a farcical interlude provided in the person of Hierocles, an 'oracle-monger' from Oreus, and an arch-humbug. He is anxious to get a share of the sacrificial meat, but his 'oracles' only provoke ridicule and he is driven off with mockery. When he is gone the Chorus express once more their delight at their escape from the distress and discomfort of war and draw an idyllic picture of country pleasure in time of peace.

"For there is no greater pleasure than when all your sowing's sped,
When the skies are dripping, dripping, and you hear a neighbour's tread:

‘On a day like this Comarchides,’ says he, ‘what should we do?’

‘For this great blessing a carouse, say I, and what say you?’

So, wife, just roast three bushels of your kidney-beans, and mind

To mix with them good wheaten flour, and figs of choicest kind

Let Syra summon Manes from the farm without delay —

‘Tis no good to think of picking leaves from off the vines to-day,

Nor yet to delve the roots about, for the ground is soaked with
rain

Send someone to my house for a fine thrush, and finches twain

There should be beestings, too, indoors, and four good bits of
hare —

There’s three to bring for supper here; and one’s for father’s
share.

—That is unless a weasel came and stole them in the night;

I heard a scuffling certainly and it gave me quite a fright

Get myrtles from Aeschinades, the ones with berries, please.

And as you pass just give a shout to bid Charinades

Come and pass the wine-cup with us,

In Heaven’s bounteousness rejoicing —

God’s good promise of increase’¹

Yet another comic interlude follows. A sickle-maker and a caskmaker come to offer profuse thanks to Trygaeus for restoring their trades, they beg him to take as many casks and sickles as he pleases, and accept a gift of money besides as a wedding present. The helmet-crest maker and the breastplate maker, on the other hand, and the man whose trade is to burnish spears, come to complain of the ruin of their industries. They offer spears, breastplates and helmet-crests for anything they will fetch. and go away disconsolate when—after various ludicrous suggestions of the uses to which they might be put in peace time—no demand whatever is found for their goods. There is a good deal of incidental fooling. A trumpet-maker and a helmet-maker fare no better. Trygaeus suggests that trumpets, set on end and filled with lead, would make a serviceable stand for a pair of scales. Helmets might be sold in Egypt to hold the huge draughts of physic, which report says Egyptians are dosed with three times a month. The spear-burnisher is disgusted at an offer to take his spear-shafts (sawn in two) as vine props at ten a penny.

¹ Lines 1140-1158

And now the wedding-guests have all arrived, eager for the marriage-feast, and the bride is brought in, carried high on the shoulders of one half of the Chorus. The other half-Chorus lift Trygaeus high in air, and our comedy concludes with a regular marriage-song to the refrain
“ Hymen, Hymenaeus O ! ”

“ You who ready stand to play
Your appointed part to-day,
Lift the happy bridegroom high !
Hymen, Hymenae, cry,
Hymen, Hymenaeus oh !

CHAPTER XV

GREEK DRAMA

3 ORIGIN AND HISTORY

“ From improvised beginnings . . . tragedy advanced little by little . . . passing through change after change, until it had attained suitable form ”

ARISTOTLE, *Poetics*, 4, 12

“ . . . no one is capable of feeling that Sophocles is supreme who does not feel that Euripides is admirable ”

“ Euripides is human, but Sophocles is more human . . . ”

“ Sophocles is the purest type of the Greek intellect at its best ”

JEBB, *Attic Orators*, pp xcvii and xcviii

Peculiarities of Greek Drama.—We have endeavoured so far to let Greek tragedy and comedy at Athens speak for themselves. This is what they were like at their best. But there is much certainly that is strange to us and not a little difficult to reconcile with our instinctive and acquired notions of drama. Leaving comedy aside for the time being, we may recall what in the Aeschylean trilogy was most opposed to our preconceived ideas of drama, and enquire if there is any explanation. The most startling peculiarity of Greek tragedy is the presence of the Chorus (this applies indeed to Comedy also, but in a less degree). In each of the three dramas of our trilogy a band of singers came upon the scene early in the course of the action, and remained upon it till the close of the play. In the *Agamemnon* it is a body of Argive Councillors, members of the Boulê or Senate, in the *Choephoroe* it is a number of women of the royal household, slaves brought from Troy after its destruction, in the



THE THEATRE AT EPIDAURUS,

showing the position of the orchestra in a Greek theatre. The view is taken from outside the remains of the stage buildings and looks across the orchestra to the auditorium. This theatre is considered the most beautiful of surviving Greek theatres, and is more regular and symmetrical than the theatre of Dionysus at Athens. The diameter of its orchestra is 66 feet.

From a photograph in the collection of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies

Eumenides the Chorus is formed of the supernatural beings who give their name to the play itself. The Chorus are not 'on the stage' in the same sense as the actors, though they take part in the action of the play. Their station, the station to which they march when they come, and where their odes are sung and their movements performed throughout, is the circular area between the front of the scene where we have our stage and the auditorium. The Greeks, as we have already had occasion to note (above, p. 382), called this area the orchestra, or dancing-floor. This in the Theatre of Dionysus in fifth-century Athens was a circle about 90 feet in diameter.¹

The Chorus.—The main function of the Chorus is to drone out long chants in a sort of recitative varied by livelier measures, to the accompaniment of music and stately dancing movements. The chants are called *odes*, and they bear closely on the action of the play, though they are not always essential to it. Now all this is very odd to us, and so alien to the purpose of the drama as we understand it, that we naturally wonder how such a convention established itself.² For the Chorus is a necessary part of a tragedy as fifth-century Athens conceived of it. The dramatist had no choice in the matter. It was a rule to which he had to conform. Every play must have its chorus, and a chorus of the kind described above. To accept a play for production (which was done by the archons) was, in the phrase of the day, to 'give a chorus' to the poet. The manager, who put the plays on the stage and found the expenses, was the chorus-trainer, or *choragus*. The hampering effect, from our point of view, of such a convention is at once perceived, if we suppose it applied to the modern, or to the Elizabethan, stage. Suppose it necessary to reconstruct *Hamlet*, so as to afford place for a Chorus of Danish councillors, or *King Lear*

¹ The later orchestra, which is what we see on the site to-day, has a diameter of 65 feet only.

² The Chorus in modern opera and musical comedy is like, and yet very unlike, the Chorus of the Greek drama, broadly like as musical embellishment, unlike in that its dramatic connection with the action is at most very slender.

with a Chorus of British maidens, attendants on Cordelia, or Galsworthy's *Strife* with a Chorus of elderly Trades Unionists The continued presence of the Chorus, however, and the name of their dancing-floor, *orchêstra*, really afford the key to a right understanding of Greek drama. *Orchêstra* means 'dancing-floor,' neither more nor less, the place set apart for the trained band of *Choreutae*, where they may sing and perform their evolutions The *orchestra*, so understood, existed before either theatre or stage-buildings, and it becomes clear that the Chorus itself was not an accessory of the drama added to produce certain effects, but part of the original rite out of which drama grew. The Chorus in fact is primary drama derivative.

Evolution of Tragedy.—Aristotle here, as in so many matters, puts us in the way of reaching the true explanation. He remarks that tragedy was developed out of dithyrambic poetry;¹ and a dithyramb is just a choral ode. It is a highly wrought and emotional song in honour of Dionysus the name comes seemingly from Asia Minor;² and so possibly (by way of Thrace) did the cult of Dionysus³ The problem now is to see how out of the choral chant sung by a band of fifty trained *Choreutae* the acted drama was evolved Aristotle does not tell us; but we can see that if the dithyrambic ode itself tended to take on a dramatic character (and this it certainly did through the very nature of the worship of Dionysus),⁴ and that if some outside person was introduced talking with the Chorus or its leader; and if further that person were made to assume some 'character' with which the ode had to do, we have the germ of the Aeschylean drama. This is what tradition says actually happened in the townships of rural Attica, when Thespis of Icaria travelled

¹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 4 12 What exactly Aristotle says is that Tragedy arose "from the leaders of the dithyramb", and what this means appears from the account given above

² "The Dithyramb—an Anatolian Dirge" is the title of a paper in the *Classical Review* for February-March, 1922.

³ See vol i p 55

⁴ See vol. i p 56

about with his waggon-load of chorus-singers. Their faces were smeared with wine-lees, and one of the members of his 'company' was dressed up to represent various characters, and so they enacted rudimentary dramas. It is the Roman poet Horace who has handed on this account of Thespis and his waggon¹ but from other sources we get the names of plays attributed to him and the statement that he 'discovered one actor.'² Here again philology reinforces our argument. For the Greek word for an actor means literally 'answerer' that is to say, the first actor was the person who 'answered' the Chorus leader, and so began dramatic dialogue. We have it on Aristotle's authority that Aeschylus introduced a second actor, and Sophocles a third. *There were never more than three in the fifth century*, so that we have to bear in mind this other limitation restricting the freedom of Greek tragic drama, that the play must be so constructed that all the parts can be distributed between three actors. This holds of each of the dramas of the Aeschylean trilogy and (with a few doubtful exceptions which seem to require a fourth actor) of all the Greek tragedies that have come down to us. The actors were named first, second, and third actor, *prot*-agonist, *deuter*-agonist, *trit*-agonist and it is from this contrast that our word *protagonist* gets its special meaning.

Aeschylus.—But Aeschylus did very much more than add a second actor. Far more than anyone else he *made* the Greek drama as we know it. He gave it elevation, and perfection of form and dramatic quality. Not that Aeschylus was the first Athenian writer of tragedy worthy to be called a dramatic poet. There was an interval of more than a full generation between the probable date of Thespis' wanderings with his touring company, and the date at which Aeschylus began to

¹ Horace, *Ars Poetica*, II 275-7

² In Diogenes Laertius. Hence the importance of Thespis (who has given us the adjective Thespian). For as Professor Norwood writes: "If this was done by Thespis, he was the founder of European drama" (*Greek Tragedy*, p. 5)

exhibit plays (Thespis 535, Aeschylus 500) We have the names of three celebrated dramatists earlier than Aeschylus, and we know of at least one of those, Phrynicus, that he was a true poet and a skilful playwright One famous drama of his, the *Fall of Miletus*, we had occasion to mention in Vol I¹

His Seven Surviving Tragedies.—Aeschylus was a native of Eleusis born in 525, and so thirty-five years old when, as we have seen, he fought at Marathon, he was forty-five at the time of the battle of Salamis All his life from the age of twenty-five he was exhibiting tragedies His first tragic victory (that is *first prize*) was in 485, his last, with the *Orestea*, in 458 He died in Sicily soon after 458, one story said, in enforced exile His lofty mind and character are witnessed by his surviving dramas There are only seven of these, though the names of many more are known and the whole number is said to have been about ninety The four other surviving plays besides the linked plays of the trilogy—are *The Suppliant Maidens*, *The Persians*, *The Seven against Thebes*, and the *Prometheus* There is very marked development between the earliest of these and the Orestean trilogy³ Two of them, the *Persians* and the *Prometheus*, are of very special interest We have already had occasion to speak of each, of the *Persians* in connection with the battle of Salamis, for in the play we have the description of an eye-witness,⁴ of the *Prometheus* in the chapter on Gods and Heroes⁵

His Prometheus.—The *Prometheus Bound* must be placed among the grandest achievements of human genius. Like Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* it is cosmic in reach It takes in the whole destiny of man from brute savagery (before the use of fire was known) to the civilization of fifth-century Athens, and it goes back further into the past beyond mankind to the war of rival dynasties in Heaven Its inner and spiritual mean-

¹ Vol I p 276

² Vol I p 296

³ More than half of the *Suppliant Maidens* is Choral chant, only one actor is employed and there is no scenery

⁴ See Vol I p 350-55

⁵ See Vol I p 72

ing transcends time altogether it is a drama of the invincibility of spirit by material force it is a conflict of power and goodness Prometheus out of a divine pity has intervened to save the human race from annihilation Zeus, monarch of the Younger Gods,¹ in dissatisfaction at the weakness and ineptitude of mankind, has decreed to do away with them altogether Prometheus by the gift of fire to man enables him to overcome his original feebleness² and enter upon the path of progress, which leads from savagery to civilization. But in order to endow mankind with fire, Prometheus must steal it out of heaven. And this brings him into conflict with the will of the new monarch of the universe, Zeus, who is now omnipotent, and who is implacably angered The giants, Force and Violence (*Kiatos* and *Bia*), are his servants and instruments By his command they fasten the great-souled Titan to a rock amid wild and desolate scenery, there to expiate his offence against *the power that is* in everlasting torment The action of the play consists in the inflexible endurance of Prometheus in spite of all attempts to shake his firmness Hephaestus, out of his own compassion, tries to work upon him, even while he helps to execute the cruel will of Zeus Oceanus urges trite prudential reasons for submission, since it is useless to resist omnipotence Prometheus, for man's sake, holds firmly to his resolve in spite of every persuasion, every menace, every pang—eternal type of those who defy power for honour's sake and their own sense of right The Titan's sufferings and indomitable spirit are presented in poetry in which Aeschylus' majestic diction is mellowed into tenderness and beauty, with a force of poetic imagination which transcends the bounds of space and time The height of sublimity which Aeschylus attains in this masterpiece has never been more adequately expressed than recently in Professor Norwood's words “Above

¹ Compare *Eumenides*, l 162

² Hobbes' famous description of man's life in the 'state of war' seems here in point "And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short" *Leviathan*, l 13.

all, the maturity of Aeschylus' poetic strength is to be seen in the terrific perspectives which he brings before us—perspectives of time, as the voice of the tortured prophet carries us down through a vista of centuries through the whole history of Io's race¹ to the man of destiny, perspectives of scenery, as the eye of the Ocean-Nymphs from the summit of earth gazes down upon the tribes of men, horde behind horde fading into the distance, all raising lament for the sorrows of their saviour, perspectives of thought, as the exultant history of civilization leaps from the lips of him who dies hourly through untold years to found and uphold it, telling how that creeping victim of his own helplessness and the disdain of Heaven goes from weakness to strength and from strength to triumph"²

Sophocles and Euripides.—Aeschylus was the first great master of Greek tragedy, and there are two others, Sophocles and Euripides. One was thirty years younger than Aeschylus, the other forty-five. Sophocles was the elder of the two born in 496 or 497, but he outlived his younger contemporary though only by a few months. Both died in 406 B.C., the year of Arginusae. Sophocles had first wrested the prize from Aeschylus in 468, Euripides' first victory was in 428. Regarding Sophocles the judgment of his own day and the judgment of future ages has been practically unanimous. He was accepted in his own time as the peer of Aeschylus, and by many judges was held even to surpass him. These are the only two opinions of his place and merit now. Sophocles produced dramatic masterpieces throughout his long life, more than a hundred plays altogether. The first prize was adjudged to him no less than eighteen times, and he was never placed lower than second. The last of his plays, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, written when he was in his ninetieth year, contains some of his most beautiful poetry. His life was in other respects uniformly successful and

¹ Io, one of the 'dramatis personae' in the *Prometheus*, was ancestress of Heracles who, according to the received legend, ultimately delivers Prometheus.

² *Greek Tragedy*, p. 96

happy. He was popular for his amiable disposition and social geniality. More than once he was chosen to fill the highest official positions at Athens.¹ "Blessed was Sophocles," wrote one of his contemporaries,² "who passed so many years before his death, a happy man and brilliant, who wrote many beautiful tragedies and made a fair end of life which knew no misfortune." Euripides' life was far less equable and fortunate and the history of his literary reputation has been quite different. There were violent disputes about his merits and demerits in his lifetime, and critical controversy has been busy about him in our own day. He is still the most debated of the great Greek poets. And the reason was that Euripides reflected new tendencies and expressed a new spirit. Aeschylus, though not untroubled by the deeper questions which lay beneath the popular mythology and accepted ethics, expressed the spirit of conservative Athens, the spirit which Aristophanes looked back to admiringly of the men who fought at Marathon. It is a spirit of reverence, of faith in national ideals, of conflict in their defence, and victory. Sophocles expresses the same spirit calmed and perfected in the great years which followed the repulse of the Mede, it is the spirit which we see wrought out in the Parthenon and the Propylaea, and in the Parthenon sculptures. Euripides was of the new age, the age which came in with Anaxagoras and the Sophists and Socrates. His was a spirit of doubt and questioning and unrest, of dissatisfaction with current beliefs and standards of conduct, of a quest for truer criteria. His acutely critical intellect was combined with a passionate appreciation of beauty, whether in literary expression or the portrayal of character, not a whit inferior to Aeschylus' or Sophocles'. There results consequently a sharp conflict of tendencies in the poet and in his work. His tragedies have neither the spiritual exaltation of

¹ He was 'strategos' or general in 440 B.C., and his name is found in the Tribute List (see above, p. 20) of 436 as one of the Hellenotamiae

² Phrynicus, the *Comic poet*. The translation is Norwood's (*Greek Tragedy*, p. 14)

Aeschylus' nor the serene loveliness of Sophocles'. But they are vividly human, and on this account their appeal to some minds is even more compelling. In his own day, what was new in his outlook and method excited fervent admiration in some few, others it roused to alarm, opposition and mockery.

Conflicting opinions about Euripides.—Aristophanes was one of the latter. Nearly all his earlier comedies, from the *Acharnians* to the *Thesmophoriazousae*, contain some gibe at Euripides, whether it takes the form of personal ridicule, or of the parodying of lines from his tragedies. In the *Frogs*, in particular, Aristophanes makes merciless fun of Euripides, his prologues, his subjects, his metrical novelties, his argumentativeness, his verbal cleverness¹. And in doing this he is appealing to popular judgment. It is clear that in Euripides' own time there were critics at Athens who regarded his innovations in tragic method and style as a deplorable falling away from Aeschylus and Sophocles, and the tendencies of thought induced by his poetry as highly pernicious. After he had been for some time dead there was a complete reversal of this judgment. Euripides became, not all at once, but gradually, the most admired of the great three. Aeschylus and Sophocles, more especially the former, fell into neglect. Possibly our possession of nineteen of his dramas as against seven of Sophocles' and seven of Aeschylus' is a reflection of this greater vogue². His popularity continued through the Middle Ages, and down to comparatively modern times. About a century and a half ago there was a reaction, there was something like an agreement among scholars to disparage Euripides. Still more recently Euripides has found powerful champions³. The truth seems to be that judgment of Euripides

¹ See Aristophanes, *Frogs*, from 1 830 to the end

² The plain reason, however, for the preservation of the surviving plays of Sophocles and Aeschylus, and of nine out of the nineteen of Euripides, is that the plays were in ancient times selected for school use

³ Especially Dr Verrall in *Four Plays of Euripides* and *Euripides the Rationalist*; but Haigh, Dr Gilbert Murray, and Professor Norwood, all in various ways, also, pay homage to Euripides' genius

is partly matter of temperament, and partly a matter of changing standards. Judged by the canons of Greek tragedy he represents decline, but in relation to drama universally considered he represents advance. Greek drama as perfected by Sophocles could not outlast the special political and social conditions of fifth-century Greece. If there was to be drama as a common possession for mankind, there must be a movement away from the peculiar limiting conditions of the Attic drama. The process has begun when already in the lifetime of Aeschylus the Chorus takes less space in the play and dialogue more. It is continued in a progressive weakening of choruses and strengthening of the drama proper in Sophocles. But in Sophocles the chorus is still an integral part of the drama and essential to it. The first decisive step in emancipation was to disconnect the chorus altogether from the action of the play and make it simply a musical interlude between acts. Now though this step as Aristotle writes,¹ was only taken finally by Agathon, it was anticipated by Euripides in certain of his plays. A not less important advance in the direction of universal drama was the elaboration of problems of character on the plane of ordinary human nature instead of on the plane of antique heroic character. Euripides treats Agamemnon, Orestes, Theseus, Jason, Admetus, Alcestis, Helen, Creusa, as men and women of his own day, to the scandal of his conservative-minded contemporaries, but the great gain of drama as an universal form of art.

Surviving Dramas of Euripides.—But it should be possible to put aside all these accidents of literary history, and form for ourselves an estimate of Euripides' quality as poet and dramatist from his nineteen surviving plays. The *Alcestis* is probably the best known of these. And it may be read with much advantage in Browning's 'transcript' under the title *Balaustion's Adventure*. But it is far from being the greatest of his works; indeed, strictly speaking, it is not a tragedy at all, but a satyric drama, modified to a form little distinguishable from the

¹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, 18 7

other plays of a tetralogy Euripides has the good fortune (for the English reader who has no Greek) that seven of his plays (*Alcestis*, *Hippolytus*, *Bacchae*, *Trojan Women*, *Electra*, *Medea*, and *Iphigenia in Aulis*) and the *Rhesus* which is usually included in his works, may be read as English poetry in Gilbert Murray's translations Any one of these (especially, perhaps, the *Hippolytus*, *The Trojan Women*, or the *Medea*) will give the reader a good measure of the tragic power and the 'modernity' of Euripides Most of them have been acted in these versions In particular Londoners had recently several opportunities of seeing the *Trojan Women* (and also the *Medea*) The *Trojan Women* must have been a revelation to many who saw it Doubtless experience of war from 1914 to 1918 had prepared the minds of these audiences to follow this war-drama of another day with an understanding and insight impossible before Euripides' tragedy is one of the most powerful anti-war pamphlets ever written The subject is the sufferings of women in war portrayed in the fate of the women of Troy after the capture and sack of that city by the Achaeans The poet's extraordinary genius is shown most of all by the art with which the anguish of the whole calamity is concentrated in Hecuba, wife of Priam and mother of Hector Pitiable as is the fate of Polyxena, of Cassandra, of Andromachê, it is tolerable in contrast with the measureless burden of sorrow borne by this aged queen and mother whose whole existence is bound up in Ilium and the royal House of Priam. Even when the mangled body of Astyanax (Andromachê's little son) is brought in (he has been thrown from the battlements of Troy by order of the victors), we feel as we hear the old woman crooning her agonized love and bereavement over this tender nurseling, that it is *her* anguish, which is sorest, not Andromachê's. It seems impossible, but it is so. Perhaps part of this effect is due to the acting of Miss Sybil Thorndike, whose Hecuba is unforgettable.

On the other hand there are bad plays of Euripides, which are thoroughly disagreeable in the reading, and the

acting of which could bring no pleasure—the *Helen*, the *Orestes* and, strangely enough, the *Hecuba*. And there are plays which, while their power and insight are beyond question and compel admiration, leave mixed impressions of pleasure and pain—the *Medea*, the *Hippolytus*, the *Bacchae*. The last, which was produced in 405, the year after Euripides' death, marvellous as a *tour de force*, is yet revolting. The catastrophe is merely horrible, and none of the horror is veiled. The *Iphigeneia in Aulis*, written and produced, it is believed, in the same year, is finely imagined as well as cleverly constructed.

Such are the strange contrasts of Euripides' genius.

Probably no reader of to-day will fail to recognize its brilliant qualities, the power of realizing character, the resourcefulness in dramatic construction, the mastery of language. Few probably will deny that the very fulness of the last of these gifts was a snare to him. Some of the plays certainly suffer from those rhetorical tendencies¹ which became so strong in Hellas in the fourth century B.C. (as we noted in Chapter XIII), and which had already set in with the teaching of the sophists in the latter half of the fifth century. Even in the *Trojan Women*, which we selected for special admiration, there is a bad example of this in the debate over Helen's guiltiness to which Menelaus is made to listen. We find it in the *Hecuba*, in the *Orestes*, even in the *Alcestis*. This rhetoric is a real blemish spoiling the poetry and offending our sense of dramatic fitness. But while this fault detracts from our enjoyment of much of Euripides, it does not affect the splendour of his greatest work.

Sophocles.—No one who reads the *Troades*, the *Hippolytus* or the *Bacchae* in Professor Murray's English can doubt, I think, that Euripides was a very great poet and dramatist. He comes indeed much nearer to the modern conception of drama than either Aeschylus or Sophocles. With him the play has come to be the thing, not the choral odes, or even the poetry. He sets out to realize

¹ Aristotle remarks (*Poetics*, 6 16). "Now the older poets gave their dialogue a truly civic cast the poets of to-day make it rhetorical."

character and situation imaginatively and develops the action out of these. But for the perfection of that unique combination of religious and dramatic motives which is Greek tragedy we must look to Sophocles. For in him by the consensus of all critics ancient and modern, as well as in the judgment of his contemporaries, Greek drama reached its perfect accomplishment. When one turns to the seven surviving plays in the hope of making intelligible to those who cannot read Sophocles the noble excellence of beauty attained by Greek drama in his hands, one is met by the difficulty of deciding which play of his to select for illustration. Shall it be *Oedipus King* for its tragic completeness and the exactitude with which it answers to Aristotle's canons? Shall it be the *Electra* for convenience of comparison with Euripides' and Aeschylus' treatment of the same subject? Shall it be the *Ajax* for the sake of its Salaminian seamen, and the scent of the sea which breathes through its lyrics, and of the magnificent death-scene of the hero? Or the *Philoctetes* for the island scenery and the touches which disprove the charge that Greek poetry lacks appreciation of wild natural beauty, for the warmth of human feeling in *Philoctetes* and *Neoptolemus*? Or the *Oedipus at Colonus* for a certain other-worldly quality in its last scenes and for the matchless choral ode which (according to a story in itself little probable) convinced an Athenian law court of the master's perfect sanity? All these I put aside, and take the *Antigonë*, from a conviction that in all the marvellous riches of Greek drama there is nothing greater than this play. Here, as in Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, the centre of interest is a spiritual conflict, not the problem of the recurring blood-feud and escape from it, but that deeper and ever-latent conflict of the higher and lower moral law, the man-made and the god-given. Temporal power in the person of Creon publishes abroad a certain edict. Antigonë through instinctive recoil from something in that edict which violates the sanctions of a higher duty, disobeys and is condemned to a cruel death. This and its further tragical consequences is the subject of the *Antigonë*.

The Story of the House of Oedipus.—But to follow the *Antigoné* we need the previous story as told in two other plays of Sophocles, which deal with the terrible calamities of the house of Labdacus. These plays do not, as one might expect, form a trilogy with the *Antigoné*. The existing evidence shows that the three plays, *Oedipus King*, *Oedipus at Colonus*, and *Antigoné*, were produced at widely different dates. Sophocles, we are told independently, departed from Aeschylus' practice of shaping his three plays into the higher unity of a trilogy. Each of his tragedies is self-contained, and the four dramas of his sets are unconnected in subject. Nevertheless these three plays so far form a connected story that the events of the two *Oedipus* plays are presupposed in the *Antigoné*.

Sophocles' *Oedipus King* is regarded by Aristotle as the perfect example of the characteristic excellences of Greek tragic drama. The play is a marvel of skilful construction and there would be special pleasure in exhibiting the art by which it is put together. The subject is almost too painful for dramatic representation, but so great is the intensity of the poet's tragic power that this is forgotten when the play is actually seen. By contrast, the *Oedipus at Colonus*, the latest composed of Sophocles' plays, is also the most serenely beautiful, and the scene is Colonus, Sophocles' own native place, a village about a mile northwest of Athens, where there was in Sophocles' day a wooded enclosure consecrated to the Eumenides. But it would take too long to follow the dramatic action of these two plays at length. It must suffice to sketch as much of the story as is necessary for the understanding of the *Antigoné*.

Oedipus was son of Laius and Jocasta, king and queen of Thebes. It had been prophesied of him before his birth that he was fated to kill his father and marry his mother, and the story was that in spite of the parents' agreement to make fulfilment impossible by destroying the babe as soon as born, through the secret workings of destiny the horror was in the end brought to pass. The *Oedipus King* turns on the discovery of the terrible truth

when (long after the death of Laius) Oedipus and Jocasta are living in seemingly secure prosperity, parents of four children, two sons Polynices and Eteocles, and two daughters Antigonê and Ismenê. When the full horror is made plain, Jocasta takes her own life and Oedipus stabs his eyes to blindness with the pin of a brooch snatched from her dress. The play ends with the spectacle of Oedipus, sightless and bleeding, lamenting in appalling words the extremity of his misfortune. The action of the *Oedipus at Colonus* takes place some years later. Oedipus driven forth from Thebes as a pollution, has been wandering from city to city, a homeless outcast, sustained in his blindness and affliction by the loving care of Antigonê, the elder of his two daughters, who refuses to leave him. At the last Oedipus, like Orestes, finds deliverance. Without any stain of moral guilt—for all he did and suffered was in ignorance—he has borne the utmost malice of destiny, and has become, as it were, sanctified by suffering. He now finds refuge at Colonus, in the grove of the Eumenides, and is protected by Theseus, king of Athens, from further outrage which threatened from Thebes. The 'passing of Oedipus' is described towards the close of Sophocles' play in a passage¹ which "in breathless loveliness, pathos, and religious profundity is beyond telling flawless and without peer"².

The *Antigonê*, though a drama of much earlier date, carries the sorrowful history of the House of Labdacus one stage further. Antigonê and Ismenê have returned to Thebes, but their coming does not avert a struggle which had long been threatening between their two brothers, who, on reaching man's estate had been appointed joint sovereigns in their father's room. Eteocles, the younger, has dispossessed the elder Polynices, and, with the support of Creon, his mother Jocasta's brother, refuses to receive him back to a share in the sovereignty. The cause of the exiled Polynices is taken up by Adrastus, king of Argos, who has given him one of his daughters in marriage,

¹ *Oedipus at Colonus*, ll. 1587 to end.

² Norwood, *Greek Tragedy*, p. 171.

and vows to restore him in his right by force of arms. Polynices and the Argive host enter Boeotia and appear before the walls of Thebes. The invaders are marshalled in seven divisions under seven chieftains,¹ one against each of the seven gates of Thebes. At each of the seven gates the assailants are defeated. Adrastus, the Argive king, escapes by flight, before the other six gates the leaders of the attack lie dead. At one of them the brothers Eteocles and Polynices have met in single combat and fallen, each by the other's hand. It is at this point that the action of the *Antigonê* opens.

The “Antigonê” in Outline.—It is the morning after the repulse of the attack on Thebes. The dead bodies of Polynices and Eteocles lie in front of the gate called Uppermost. The Argive army is in flight. Antigonê and Ismenê meet outside the palace, once Oedipus', now, since Eteocles' death, Creon's. Antigonê has called her sister out to speak with her in secret. Creon has issued a proclamation that Eteocles shall be buried with royal honours, but Polynices, as a traitor who plotted to destroy his native city with fire and sell her children into slavery, is to be left where he lies, a prey to dogs and vultures. Antigonê tells of this decree with a shudder, for it violates the deepest seated of Hellenic pieties, the duty of giving rest to the dead. She makes known her resolution to bury Polynices secretly in defiance of the proclamation, and invites Ismenê to aid her in this pious deed. Ismenê, nurseling of a palace, shrinks from this daring proposal in natural terror, and the sisters part in anger. The Chorus, a band of Theban elders, now march in, singing a splendid ode of triumph over the Argive foe, to greet the rays of the sun, which, slanting over the streams of Dirce, usher in the most glorious of days for seven-gated Thebes, since the Argives with their white shields have all fled in headlong rout. As they conclude their song, Creon enters full of his proclamation, and its righteousness in distinguishing between the hero who had died fighting for his country and the traitor who came to destroy it. The Chorus show

¹ Hence the title of Aeschylus' play *The Seven against Thebes*.

signs of uneasiness at this purposed outrage on the dead, but outwardly profess acquiescence. At this point one of the soldiers set by Creon to watch over the dead body of Polynices, and prevent any attempt to give it burial, approaches in evident agitation. With comical reluctance he makes known the errand on which he has come. It is to inform Creon that in spite of his edict the corpse has been tampered with. Some unknown hand has thrown over it a little loose earth. The old men are inclined to see in this the hand of Heaven. This adds fuel to the flames of Creon's anger at the breach of his edict, he threatens death with torture to all the guards, if they fail to discover who it is that has dared thus to cross his will. The soldier withdraws disconsolate. The choral chant which follows descants on the daring of man, how he crosses stormy seas, tames earth to the plough, and compels birds, beasts, and fishes to minister to his needs. Before they have well finished, they see to their amazement, the guard returning along with the rest of the picket, and in the midst of them Antigonê, a prisoner. The guard relates how at noontide a blinding dust-storm came on, and when the air began to clear again, he and his companions caught sight of Antigonê wailing over her brother's corpse, which by Creon's order had been once more bared of earth. They had then and there arrested her and have brought her with them. Creon in cold rage turns on Antigonê, demanding if she avows the deed. She makes no denial. He asks her whether she knew the proclamation, and when she says 'yes,' how she dared break the law by him enacted. Calm and unterrified Antigonê makes her confession of faith.

"It was not God who made this proclamation,
Nor Right that harbours with the gods below.
Nor did I deem thine edict had such strength
That a mere mortal might transgress the sure,
Unwritten, ordinances of the gods
Not of to-day, or yesterday, are these,
But everlasting since time first began.
Never would I, for fear of any wrath
Of man, incur the judgment of the gods.

I knew that I shall die, e'en though thy word
 Had not proclaimed it If before my time
 'Tis fated that I die, I count it gain.
 For whoso in a sea of miseries
 Lives, as I live, in dying has great gain
 Therefore I grieve not, though to meet this doom
 Is now my destiny But had I borne
 To leave my mother's son in death unburied,
 That had been grief I am not grieving now
 And if, perchance, to thee my deeds seem folly,
 Maybe 'tis but a fool that judges so "¹

At this high self-vindication, which he reckons mere insolence, Creon is more than ever enraged, and knowing the close affection between the two sisters he is at first for involving Ismenê in Antigonê's doom In a verbal duel which follows Antigonê makes one profession which throws a revealing light on her character Creon is reproaching her for showing regard for Polynices, her country's enemy, and cries "An enemy dead is never the more a friend" Antigonê answers "To share in love, not hatred, was I born"

Ismenê in her distraction is eager now to be doomed to die with Antigonê, but Antigonê will not allow it and her seeming hardness in repulsing Ismenê's proffered sacrifice is the only harsh trait in an otherwise exquisitely tender character In the end Creon clears Ismenê and orders Antigonê alone to death The Chorus lament this new addition to the sorrows of the house of Labdacus The drama now takes a fresh pathetic turn with the appearance of Haemon, Creon's son, who is betrothed to Antigonê and figures as the chivalrous lover of romance born out of time Creon bids him choose between his affianced bride and his father Haemon professes a dutiful readiness to submit his wishes to his father's will, but is bold to plead with his father for his father's sake. The people do not really, he says, approve Creon's proclamation, though fear keeps them from showing open disapproval. In their hearts they abhor the treatment of Polynices and honour Antigonê But Creon only hardens

¹ *Antigone*, 450-470

He is haunted by a miserable fear of being worsted by a woman, and taunts Haemon with weakness. When Haemon protests that he is pleading in his father's interest, the only reply is that Antigonê must die. Haemon hints darkly that he will not survive Antigonê, his father mistaking the words for a threat against himself, declares that Antigonê shall be put to death before her lover's very eyes. "That shall never be," Haemon answers, and goes out telling his father that he shall look upon his face no more. When he is gone the Chorus hymn the matchless power of love "couching in the soft cheek of a maid"; it is a short ode of a delicate beauty unique among choral odes in tragedy.¹ Their ode changes its tone to sorrow as Antigonê is led in by her guards. A forlorn figure she now makes on her way to death. The high courage which sustained her while her daring deed was still in the doing has fallen from her. She feels her isolation already, the clumsy sympathy of the Chorus seems to her mere mockery. She is not so strong as she seemed. Her strength is in loving. Has she not said, "To share in love not hatred was I born?" All her protective mother-love had gone out to the erring, but unfortunate, brother, doomed to the everlasting restlessness of the unburied. She had dared the utmost to save him from that, and this was her reward, for her act of piety an impious death. And for compassion the old men tell her "Your own self-will has undone you." She feels abandoned by god and man:

"Unwept, unwedded, friendless, lo! I tread
The path of death. Never may I behold again
The sacred light of day.
There's not a friend who mourns my fate with tears."²

Creon's baleful ire pursues her. Her doom is to be immured in a tomb with a little food, and there left to die. Now her courage rises again; she addresses the tomb as her bridal-chamber and consoles herself with the hope that in the world of the dead her father, mother, brother, will greet

¹ *Antigone*, ll. 781-90

² *Antigone*, 876-881

her with a loving welcome. She gains confidence as the end draws near. She is sure her deed was right and will be acceptable to heaven.

A short choral ode follows, and then comes Teiresias, the same blind seer who revealed the awful truth to Oedipus. A boy leads him by the hand. He has come to warn Creon of certain deadly portents, ill auguries from birds in noisy conflict, fire refusing to burn the sacrifice. He knows the reason to be that the altars of the gods have been polluted by dogs and vultures with the rotting flesh of Polynices. He adjures Creon to consider well, and, if he has fallen into error, to retrieve his steps before it is too late. Mere obstinacy is stupid. Creon finds it hard to give way and at first answers the seer with reproaches. But when Teiresias in plain terms denounces the sacrilege of keeping above earth the unburied body of a kinsman, and warns him of the just vengeance of the Furies, Creon is terrified. The prophet has departed after uttering dreadful prophecies, and the Chorus testify that they have never known his predictions falsified. Soon Creon, now thoroughly alarmed, is hastening to pay tardy death-rites to the body of Polynices and to release Antigonê.

After a short interval we learn that retribution has fallen on Creon almost as overwhelming as the doom of Oedipus. Haemon is dead. Creon reached the tomb too late, only to find Antigonê hanging by the neck, dead, and Haemon, distraught with grief, clinging to her body. When Haemon saw his father, he drew his sword as if to slay him, then turned it on himself. Eurydice, wife of Creon, and mother of Haemon, enters in time to listen to this story, and at its close departs without a word. And now we hear the voice of Creon raised in agonized lamentation, blaming himself as cause of his son's violent death. Even as he speaks, a messenger comes forth from the house to tell him that another blow has fallen. Eurydice is dead, slain by her own hand. Creon's pride is utterly broken. Like Oedipus, when many years before doom came upon him, he prays to be cast forth from Thebes as a man accursed. The Chorus in a few

words point the moral. Happiness depends on good sense. men must beware of the sin of impiety. We who see the play, realize that it is the tragedy, not of Antigone, but of Creon

Other Greek Dramatists.—Any one of these dramas handed down from ancient Athens is in itself alone a possession beyond price for the human spirit. Together—and there are over thirty of them—they form a not inconsiderable part of what we inherit from Hellas. Any one who goes through life without ever reading a Greek play, even in translation, has lost one of the great possibilities of experience

Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides so far surpassed other tragic dramatists that for posterity they have come to mean practically the Greek tragic drama. Yet in their life-time they had many competitors and not infrequently the prize went to some other than one of the great three. As a matter of fact Greek tragedy continued as a living art for several centuries, and was vigorous enough in the second century B.C. to impel Latin poetry to imitation. But its full inspiration was short-lived; already by the end of the fifth century the powerful originality by which Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides towered above their contemporaries was failing, and the centuries which follow are, so far as the Attic drama is concerned, centuries of long-drawn decline. We have the names of over 150 tragic poets, though all but very few are mere names.

Later History of the Greek Drama.—The splendour of Greek drama belongs to Athens, and Athens only, but among tragic poets admitted to compete at the great Athenian festivals were some who were not native-born Athenians. Ion was one of these, and there were others, both in the fifth century B.C. and later. Ion was a Chian by birth, and was a versatile man of letters, who wrote comedies as well as tragedies, and dithyrambic and lyrical poetry, and a book of 'Memoirs.' Almost the only other tragic poet who has attained to lasting remembrance is the Athenian Agathon; and he lives chiefly because he

is the host in Plato's immortal *Banquet*¹ Aristotle records two facts about him Agathon was the first to compose choral odes for his tragedies which had no bearing on the story (above, p. 423) He wrote a play called *The Flower*, the characters of which were wholly imaginary This was an innovation, which, if it had been followed up, might have deeply affected the subsequent history of Greek drama But it was not on the contrary (as Aristotle tells us incidentally) the subjects taken for tragedy were more and more confined to the traditional legend cycle, like the stories of Orestes and Oedipus. Consequently the changes were rung on a narrowly limited stock of subjects, until all prospect of originality of treatment was exhausted This in the end was one of the causes of the extinction of Greek drama Yet in the fourth century, at all events, there was no falling off of productivity, new tragedies were written in prodigious numbers And in another way there was an enormous expansion of Greek drama and its influence Theatres were built and plays performed in other cities besides Athens This diffusion of Attic drama was vastly extended through the conquests of Alexander the Great Greek cities were founded all over the East, and wherever a Greek city was founded a theatre was built and Greek plays were performed For a time one city, Alexandria, even outshone Athens as the home of tragedy The Attic tragedy, as Haigh puts it,² was transformed "into a cosmopolitan institution" But along with this wider diffusion productive vigour waned, till at last no new plays at all were produced The custom of reproducing regularly at the Dionysiac festivals one or more of the masterpieces of the past had begun as early as the fourth century B.C. ; and as the records show, the representation of 'old' and 'new' tragedies for a long time went on together As originality failed, 'new' plays were produced less and less, till finally only 'old' plays remained. From the first

¹ The occasion of the feast was Agathon's victory in the tragic contest in the year 416, and the banquet was held at Agathon's house.

² *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 434

almost the 'old' plays were restricted to the great three, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides¹ In process of time Aeschylus almost wholly dropped out, then to a great extent Sophocles, so that Euripides was at last left in almost sole possession of the Greek theatre. It must be noted however, that this brief review takes in a long stretch of time. The total cessation of fresh dramatic production did not come till the second century A.D. Greek drama in the land of its origin came to an end in the fifth century A.D. At the last it was suppressed through the moral reprobation of the theatre and all its works, which followed the victory of Christianity over paganism. But by that time there was very little left of tragedy to suppress. Through political and social decay and the accompanying depravation of popular taste tragedy had ceased to please. Performances took place in the theatres, but they were of debased forms of drama—mimes and pantomimes, neither tragedy nor comedy, and, perhaps, not very unlike modern 'revues'. Greek and Latin classical drama disappeared from Europe till interest in it revived at the Renaissance through the re-discovery of Greek. Yet even so the Greek dramatic tradition had not wholly been lost, it lingered on among the few scholars who still studied the classics—especially in monasteries, and so influenced to some slight extent the revival of drama, hundreds of years later, in the form of Miracle Play and Mystery²

Connection with Modern Drama.—With the revival of classical studies Greek tragedy influenced the rise of the modern drama more directly. But the links between modern and ancient drama are clearer in comedy than in tragedy. The *origins* of Greek Comedy are too vexed a question to occupy us here. As with Tragedy they are traced back to the primitive worship of Dionysus,³ but Attic comedy took on literary form at Athens later than tragedy, and Aristotle declares that less was known about its history⁴ The most acute and the most copious

¹ *The Tragic Drama of the Greeks*, p. 447

² See Vol. I. p. 10

³ Vol. I. p. 56

⁴ *Poetics*, ch. v

treatment of the subject in English is Cornford's in *The Origin of Attic Comedy*. For our purpose nothing is better than Jebb's suggestive summary: "At the Dionysia, when people were assembled to worship the god and to see tragedy, the merry procession called a *comus* had become a recognized feature of the festival. It was at first a voluntary and unofficial affair. One or more troops of men dressed themselves up in mummers' costume, and marched into the sacred precinct to the music of the flute. They then sang a song in honour of Dionysus, and one of their number addressed the audience in a humorous speech, turning on civic interests and on the topics of the day. The festal procession then withdrew again. The name Comedy, *Komoedia*, originally denoted this 'Song of the Comus,' and was doubtless coined at Athens, on the analogy of *tragoedia*. About B.C. 465 the *comus* was adopted into the official programme of the festival: instead of being the voluntary work of private persons, it was now organized with aid from the State. The steps by which a dramatic performance was built up around the *comus*-song and speech can no longer be traced. But some five-and-thirty years later, at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, Attic Comedy, as we know it, was mature."¹ No complete Attic comedies have come down to us except Aristophanes' eleven, of which the *Clouds* and the *Peace* are two. Most of these belong to what is called the 'Old Comedy,' the original full and vigorous form of entertainment developed at Athens, in which the wit of the poet is under no legal restriction, public affairs are subject to free comment, and evil-doers (or those whom the poet regards as such) come under the lash by name. Through the stress of war and domestic strife this freedom of personal allusion was curtailed by penalties, and we have the Middle Comedy, exemplified by the *Plutus* of Aristophanes. Later again the freedom of Middle Comedy was further restricted, and the New Comedy came into being. The New Attic Comedy is

¹ Jebb, *The Growth and Influence of Classical Greek Poetry*, pp. 227-8

purely a comedy of manners, such as modern times are familiar with, and Menander is its traditionally greatest name. Not a single play of the New Comedy has come down to us complete,¹ but we have fortunately very fair means of appreciating its qualities in the six extant comedies of Terence, which, except for the Latin in which they are written, are domestic dramas of the New Comedy. The scene is Athens, the types of character are Athenian, the domestic life is the life of Athens in the fourth and third centuries B.C. From the *Andria* the *Hecyra*, the *Hauton-timoroumenos*, the *Eunuchus*, the *Phormio*, the *Adelphi*, we may know exactly what the New Comedy at Athens was like.² The last of these titles means 'The Brothers,' the third is Greek for 'The Man who punished himself,' the *Hecyra* means 'The Mother-in-Law.' The same is true, but to a much less extent, of the comedies of Plautus, which in their dialogue are racy of Italian soil. Their titles, too, are Latin, yet in subject and setting many of them—the *Captivi*, the *Rudens*, the *Miles Gloriosus*—are Greek. The New Comedy from the point of view of dramatic evolution connects rather with Euripides than with Aristophanes. From the surviving fragments of Menander, as also of Eubulus and Diphilus, it can be seen how much the poets of the New Comedy were under the spell of Euripides.

The Acting of Greek Plays in Modern Times.—Scarcely less important than the literary influences of the study was the revival for stage representation of Latin comedy at the universities and grammar schools. In Queen Elizabeth's time Plautus and Terence, and plays written on the same model, were frequently performed at each of the universities and in schools. The 'Westminster Play,' that is the annual performance of one of a

¹ Portions of three comedies of Menander have recently been recovered from papyri, enough to give some taste of the limpid beauty of Menander's Greek and the delicacy of his wit.

² Professor Gilbert Norwood's new book (published towards the end of last year by Blackwell) shows rare and admirably just appreciation of *The Art of Terence*.

select cycle of Latin comedies by the King's (or Queen's) Scholars of St Peter's College, Westminster, was instituted by the express desire of Queen Elizabeth, and continues to this day. The Latin 'Epilogue,' composed every year for performance as a topical afterpiece, gives perhaps a better idea of the spirit of the Old Comedy than anything on the modern stage. It offers some analogy also to Satyric drama. Opportunities of seeing Greek plays, both in the original and in English versions, have become more and more frequent since the last quarter of the 19th century. In England this revival under latter-day conditions began with the representation of the *Agamemnon* at Oxford and in St George's Hall, London, in 1880. A notable new departure was the institution in 1892 by the Warden of Bradfield College, the Rev H. B. Gray,¹ of the Bradfield plays in a theatre shaped on the ancient Greek model out of the side of a Berkshire hill.² The Radley plays in emulation of Westminster but with a wider choice, including Greek as well as Latin comedy, go back to 1881.³ Not the least remarkable achievement in this revival—which is very much wider than can be indicated here⁴—has been the series of Greek plays acted in a Sussex village,⁵ under the energetic and scholarly direction of Mrs Godwin King of Stonelands. The performances of Greek tragedy at the 'Old Vic' in 1919-20 have been already referred to.

¹ Before he went to Bradfield as Warden, Dr Gray had been for a time an Assistant Master at Westminster.

² The first Bradfield Play was the *Alcestis* in 1881. The first play to be performed in the Greek theatre (the cutting of which had begun in 1888) was the *Antigone* in 1890. Since 1892 plays have been triennial. The play of that year was the *Agamemnon*, and the three plays named now form the Bradfield cycle.

³ The play of that year was the *Phormio*. Notable productions since have been Aristophanes' *Frogs* (1900) and *Wasps* (1905), Plautus' *Aulularia* (1897), *Captive* (1898), and *Rudens* (1904).

⁴ For example looking only to schools, there have been series of Latin plays at the Oratory School, Birmingham, and at Bath College under Dr Dunn.

⁵ West Hoathly.

CHAPTER XVI

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE I.

Greek architecture stands alone in being accepted as beyond criticism, and therefore the standard by which all periods of architecture may be tested

BANISTER FLETCHER, *History of Architecture*, p 68.

Not only is Greek architecture the purest ever conceived, but it was enriched with the finest sculpture the world has ever seen

SIMPSON, *History of Architectural Development*, Vol I p 92

Among the arts of all lands and of all ages Greek sculpture sits enthroned.

JOHN WARRACK, *Greek Sculpture*, p ix

Hellenic and Gothic.—If we look at a Greek temple, or at a photograph or picture of the finer examples surviving (the Parthenon, the Theseum, the Temple of Apollo at Bassae, the Temple of Poseidon at Paestum), and ask ourselves how it compares and contrasts with the sacred architecture best known to us, our own churches and cathedrals, the most obvious point of contrast is the presence or absence of the arch. Gothic architecture depends primarily for its effects on the arch, and endless variation in the form, decoration, and grouping of arches. There are no arches in a Greek Temple, there are no curves even, except for decorative purposes¹. All the constructional lines are straight lines—vertical, horizontal, or slanting. This is not the result of accident, neither does it appear to be due to ignorance of the principles of the arch². Greek architects must have avoided the use of

¹ This statement must be qualified by what is said later

² "They" (the Greeks and Egyptians) "were perfectly acquainted with the use of the arch and its properties, but they knew that its

the arch deliberately, because it did not accord with their conception of what was appropriate and pleasing in temple architecture. The reason may be in part also climatic. It has been well said "The methods of building followed by the Greeks were largely due to the fact that the climate permitted an out-of-doors existence, and of open-air ceremonials, which in more northern climates are impossible. The effect aimed at was therefore an external one" ¹. The plan of a Greek temple, even of a fifth century temple, if we look at it, is seen to be of an extraordinary simplicity. It consists, primarily, of a rectangular chamber or shrine, the *cella*, sometimes divided in two by a party-wall, to which a fore-chamber and a back-chamber may be added. Columns are frequently ranged on all four sides of this enclosed building, sometimes on two sides only, back and front: there is hardly any complexity of structure beyond this. And yet it will probably be acknowledged, that in the best examples this form of temple is wonderfully beautiful.

The main purpose of this chapter is to trace out the secret of this beauty. And for that purpose it seems of most advantage to make a detailed study of one temple as typical. By common consent there is no Greek temple more beautiful than the Parthenon, of which we have already made some study in Chapter III. ² This chapter will, accordingly, be taken up largely with a more careful study of the Parthenon. He who understands the Parthenon holds the key of all Greek architecture, perhaps one might say, of all architecture.

Construction and Measurements of the Parthenon.—The columns of the Parthenon rise from a stylo-bate (pillar-base) or platform, 228 feet in length from west to east, 102 feet in breadth from north to south, which is lifted above the surface of the Acropolis rock on two sets of steps

employment would introduce complexity and confusion into their designs, and therefore they wisely rejected it" Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, vol 1 p 22

¹ Simpson, *History of Architectural Development*, vol 1 p 57

² Especially pp 56-57 and 60-61

The upper set of three steps is of marble, each 1 foot 8 inches high,¹ 2 feet 4 inches deep. These three steps form the immediate substructure of the Parthenon. But below them again are two more steps, originally built as the substructure of the temple planned earlier, and these are of local Piraeic stone. The main temple building was an oblong roughly 150 feet by 70, and this length was divided into two unequal parts by a crosswall. The eastern chamber, 100 Attic feet in length and hence called *Hecatompedos*,² contained the image of the goddess, the gold and ivory statue of Athena carved by Pheidias, and is therefore the main shrine or *cella*. The western chamber, not quite 50 feet long, was the *Parthenon*, the shrine of the Maiden goddess, from which the whole building takes its name. At either end, East and West, was a shallow porch some 18 feet across, the eastern called the *Pro-naos* or Fore-temple, the western the *Opistho-domos* or Back-chamber, each with a row of six columns in front of it. These columns are of exactly the same type as the columns of the great colonnade or peristyle surrounding the whole temple, but slightly smaller. The columns of the peristyle are 34 feet 2 inches in height with a diameter of 6 feet 3 inches at the base: the columns of the inner porticoes are 33 feet in height, with a diameter of 5 feet 6 inches. All these columns are of the Doric style and have twenty grooves or flutings. There are 46 external pillars, eight at each end and 17 on each side (the four corner pillars being reckoned twice), making with the twelve similar pillars of the porches 58 in all. All these pillars taper upwards thus the pillars of the peristyle, 6 feet 3 inches in diameter at the base, measure 4 feet 7 inches only at the top. Shrine and porches together make a total length of 193 feet 6 inches, so that the full dimensions of the temple building enclosed by

¹ Curiously, one of the steps, the topmost, is one inch and a quarter higher than either of the other two.

² Ninety-eight English feet equal almost exactly one hundred feet by the old Attic standard, this Attic foot being slightly shorter than the English.

the peristyle are 193 feet 6 inches by 71 feet. The breadth of the colonnade itself is 15 feet at the two ends, East and West, and one foot less at the sides.

Over the whole of this building was a sloping roof forming at either end (East and West) a gable, or *pediment*. The supports of the roof form the *entablature*. First, immediately above the squared capitals of the pillars, were the massive lengths of the *architrave*, three blocks side by side, stretching from pillar to pillar. Above the architrave came the *triglyphs* and *metopes*, forming a broad decorative band on all four sides. The *cornice* with its border called *cymatium* was the topmost member of the entablature, down to which the roof sloped along the sides. The gables formed at each end (East and West), by the slope of the roof, were filled with the sculptured groups which were the supreme glory of the Parthenon. The apex of the pediment was one foot less than 60 feet above the pavement of the stylobate, and this was further set off by a sculptured floral ornament called the *anthemion*.

The roofing and lighting of a Greek temple are disputable subjects because, from the nature of the case, no roof or ceiling has survived. The Parthenon is believed to have been completely covered in, not *hypaethral*, or partially open to the sky, as some temples were. The roof was seemingly formed by slabs, or tiles, of Parian marble, and these marble tiles were carried by wooden beams and rafters. The Parian marble was relatively transparent, and this is the most probable solution of the problem of lighting. Under the bright sunshine of Greece enough light for practical purposes usually came through the marble tiles. The *wooden* framework is sufficient explanation of the disappearance of the roof. The wood perished and the roof fell in. Below the sloping roof was a horizontal ceiling formed of square slabs or panels let into a framework of marble beams. No piece of the ceiling is left, but a ceiling of the kind has been in part preserved in the Theseum and from this we may infer what the ceiling of the Parthenon was like.

Decoration.—The columns of the peristyle, and those of the two porches in front and in rear, are of the Doric order, the plainest and most dignified of the three recognized styles, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian. This implies that they spring directly from the floor or stylobate without any other base, and that they are crowned with a capital consisting of two parts, the rounded *echinus* (sea-urchin) and the square slab above it called the *abacus*; and every column, as already said, is grooved with twenty flutings.

All four sides of the Parthenon, but especially the eastern and western ends, were adorned with sculptures. The Frieze was, as we saw in Ch III (p 60), *inside* the peristyle (that is the corridor between the columns and the walls of the temple), above the columns of the two porticoes and along the sides of the temple itself. Its slabs are three feet four inches high and of various lengths, the total length being (as we have seen), nearly 525 feet. Above the colonnade *outside*, on all four sides, in panels between the architrave and the cornice, were the *metopes*. These do not form a continuous band, but alternate with the triglyphs, square blocks of stone with deep vertical grooves lining the outer face. The name *metope* means originally 'openings' (or 'windows'), and the original metopes were open spaces between the ends of beams. When these spaces were used for decorative sculpture and filled with light slabs of marble, the name 'windows' or 'openings' was retained. There were 32 of these metopes on each side of the Parthenon, and 14 at each end, East and West, making 92 in all. But the noblest of its adornments, both in scale and character, were the pediment sculptures. The triangular spaces forming the ends of a Greek temple obviously offered the most ample field for sculptural decoration.¹ How and when the gable ends of temples were first so used archaeology cannot say. The older temple of Athens, the temple

¹ "One important lesson," writes Simpson (vol 1 p 94), "to be learnt from Greek architecture, especially of the Doric order, is that sculpture on a building is most suitable and effective when framed in."

destroyed by the Persians, was, it has been discovered, so adorned the monstrous figures from its pediments may be seen in the Acropolis Museum¹ There were notable pediment groups on the temple of Zeus at Olympia, and on the temple of Apollo at Delphi The pediment sculptures of the Parthenon excelled anything that had previously been achieved in Hellas. We shall return to these pediment groups and the other sculptures of the Parthenon in our next chapter

The Temple Shrine.—All this concerns the outside of the temple The shrine was inside the walls enclosed by the peristyle, and consisted, as already noted, of two chambers, each with a portico in front of it—the Hecatompedon and the Parthenon The Parthenon, despite the name which was after a time extended to the whole building, was the smaller and less important. It was entered from the Opistho-domos through great bronze folding-doors, 33 feet high and 16 wide, and it was used as the main temple treasury Both Pronaos and Opisthodomos were also used for the safe-keeping and display of temple treasures, and for that reason each was protected by tall metal gratings, extended from column to column of the porch The Shrine of Athena herself, the cella, was on the East, entered from the Pronaos Down its length extended two rows of columns, ten on each side, dividing the interior space into a nave and aisles, and the endmost pillars on the further side were linked by three more pillars of the same kind These were Doric pillars, 3 feet 8 inches in diameter with 16 flutings the height is unknown since all have perished This was where the gold-and-ivory Athena stood ; the mark can be seen on the pavement to-day

Scale of the Parthenon.—There is a certain interest in comparing the Parthenon, as now described, with some of the great churches of Christendom The area of the Parthenon is approximately 23,000 feet, Westminster Abbey is 46,000 feet, St Paul's Cathedral 84,000, Notre

¹ They are fully described in Part I of the *Catalogue of the Acropolis Museum* by Guy Dickins, pp 79-85

Dame de Paris 64,000, Cologne Cathedral 91,500, St Peter's, Rome, 227,000¹. If we compare heights, the apex of the gable of the Parthenon is not quite 60 feet. In Westminster Abbey the height of the Nave is 102 feet, the dome of St Paul's is 225: while the abbey towers are 225 feet high and the top of the cross on the dome of St Paul's Cathedral is 365 feet above the pavement of the street below. We see, then, that in point of size the Parthenon cannot compete with the great cathedrals of Europe. But if in the Elgin Room of the British Museum we look at the Doric capital from one of its pillars, we see that the Parthenon was on a scale grand enough to be impressive. Yet it is certainly not its size which most excites admiration. There were many larger Greek temples². There are very many much larger buildings in the world.³

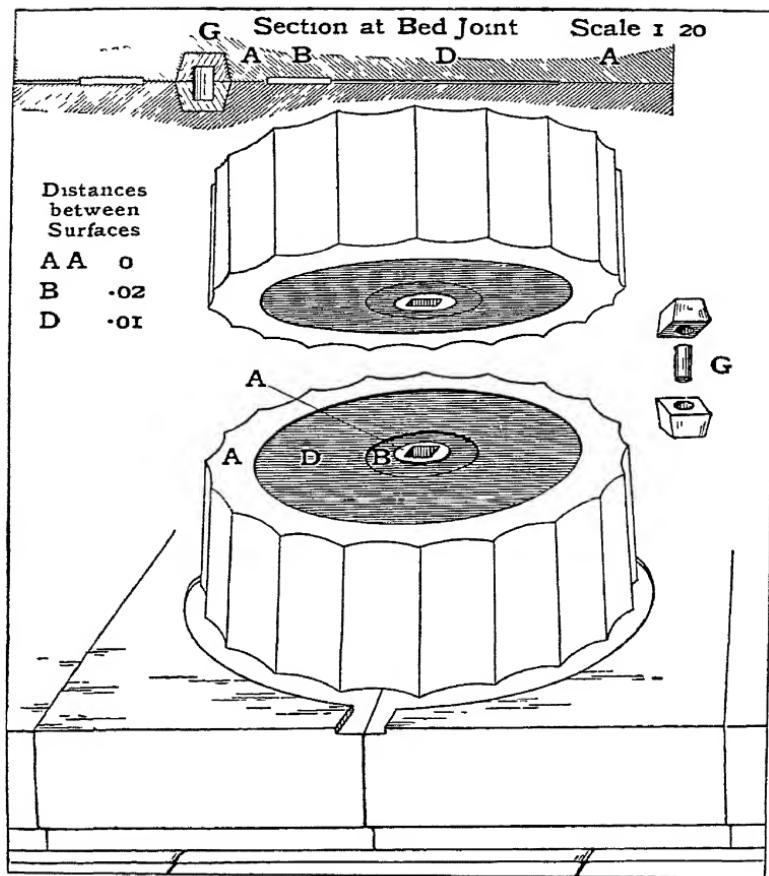
Workmanship.—The shattering of the Parthenon by Morosini's bomb in 1687 was undoubtedly a calamity for the art of Europe. Yet curiously there are for us compensating advantages in its present ruined state for a study of the art which went to its perfecting. "The workmanship of all parts of the Parthenon, whether visible or concealed, is of an extraordinary excellence"⁴. Nothing about the Parthenon is more astonishing than the skill with which parts made up of detached blocks (like the drums of columns) are fitted together and made one. The pillars are in no case monoliths, they are built up of drums or sections (generally 12 to a pillar) but the drums are so deftly fitted one upon another that the pillar appears to be a monolith. How is it done? We are able to say, because the method can be learnt from study of the drums that have fallen to the ground. It appears on

¹ Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, vol. 1, p. 24.

² The Temple of Hera in Samos had an area of 65,740 feet; the Artemisium at Ephesus of 57,072 feet, the Temple of Zeus at Athens of 47,790 feet (Fergusson, 1 p. 258).

³ The Hall of a Hundred Columns at Persepolis was 230 feet square, which gives an area of 52,900 feet, the Great Hall at Karnak has an area of 57,800 feet. The Taj Mahal at Agra has an area of about 30,000 feet.

⁴ Weller, *Athens and its Monuments*, p. 281.



DRUM OF A COLUMN OF THE PARTHENON,
showing the method of adjusting surfaces

(A A) adjusted surfaces (G) peg (B, D) surfaces slightly depressed and left in the rough

From Penrose, *Principles of Athenian Architecture*

examination that very special means were taken to ensure the perfect adjustment of the two surfaces. It was difficult, or impossible, to do this, that is bring the two surfaces to an absolutely even smoothness, over the whole of a circle whose diameter was more than six feet. So what the Athenian masons did was to bring to this high degree of smoothness an outer rim some ten inches broad. The rest of the surface with the exception of a circle round the centre about the same measurement in diameter, was slightly depressed and left in the rough, so that the only parts of the two drums actually in contact were the circles of the prepared rims and the centre. We can further see from examination of the fallen drums that in the middle of each drum a square hole was cut and into this a wooden plug was fitted. In the centre of the plug there was a round hole, in which a small peg was fixed, and there was a corresponding hole in the centre of the drum to be superimposed. This peg was not designed as a fastening to hold the drums together, but as a help merely to the exact adjustment of the two surfaces. Some think it was intended as a pivot on which the upper drum might move backwards and forwards, while the two surfaces were brought to an exact smoothness by rubbing one against the other. Rough projections were left on the drums to serve as handles by which the upper drum might be moved. An equally fine diligence was bestowed on the fitting together of the blocks which form steps and architrave (or any horizontal member of the building): "To say that a knife-blade could not be inserted between the blocks," says Gardner, "is a very rough and inadequate way of expressing the fact, the joint shows often so fine a line as scarcely to be perceptible to the eye"¹. Penrose notes of these joints that they "are made invariably to fit so closely that, unless where the stones have been separated by the violence of earthquakes or other concussions, it is frequently difficult to perceive them; and when discovered it is almost impossible to imagine a finer line than they show." And he adds his conviction:

¹ Gardner, *Ancient Athens*, p 274-5

“ This can hardly have been produced by other means than by the stones having been rubbed upon one another , no third surface used as a plane could have given such a degree of fineness ” ¹

Subtle Use of Curves.—But the most surprising revelation of the fineness of Athenian craftsmanship has come through the gradual discovery, since the study of Greek architecture was resumed a century and a half ago, of a number of devices for correcting optical distortions and softening the rigidity of straight lines. The first discovery of this sort was made by Stuart, joint author of *The Antiquities of Athens* (above, p 81). He pointed out that the Doric columns of the peristyle do not merely taper from base to capital, but in doing this they at the same time expand in a gentle curve. This swelling of the shaft in a single harmonious curve is technically known as the *entasis*. Stuart’s discovery of the *entasis* was in 1755, and it is recognized that the reason for its use is a trick of our normal eyesight which makes a pillar, the lines of which are exactly straight, appear concave. Most remarkable of all is a discovery made nearly a hundred years later that all lines bounding the length of the Parthenon—along the edges of the platform or stylobate and of the steps below and the entablature above—which at first sight appear perfectly straight, are in reality very delicately curved. The curve is extremely slight, a rise of four inches only in the full length of the stylobate from East to West, that is 4 inches in 228 feet, but all the same it is perceptible by the eye, if the observer stoops to the level of the step and looks along it. Now it happens that this peculiarity is actually noticed by Vitruvius, our chief ancient authority on Greek architecture, who wrote in the time of Augustus, as a fundamental principle of Hellenic architecture, but the passage had been overlooked, or misunderstood, so that when Mr John Pennefather detected and pointed out the peculiarity in the Parthenon in 1837, it came as a discovery Penrose, whose book published in 1851—the most interest-

¹ Penrose, *Principles of Athenian Architecture*, p. 24 (p 22 in the original edition of 1851).

ing classic of Hellenic architecture—had these curves as its main subject, remarks “Now, however strange it may seem that no one had attempted to collate on the spot these passages of Vitruvius with the architecture of the Parthenon, it is by no means so unaccountable that the curves were not sooner discovered from an inspection of the building itself, for the amount of the curvature is so exquisitely managed that it is not perceptible to a spectator standing opposite to the front, at least not until the eye has been educated by considerable study founded on knowledge of the fact. It may indeed easily be remarked by anyone who places his eye in such a position as to look along the lines of the step or entablature, from end to end.”¹

The reason why delicate curves are in these positions substituted for straight lines is that long lines when perfectly straight appear to sag, or drop in the middle, and this appearance is accentuated, when upright lines are drawn from this straight line, as by pillars on a stylobate. There are other ingenious contrivances beside for counter-acting optical distortions and softening the harsh effects of straight lines. These are summed up by Simpson “Some minor refinements which exist in the Parthenon and in a few other buildings are not actually apparent, although they make their influence felt when one is conscious of their existence. Angle columns are an inch or two wider than the others, as they stand out against the sky, and consequently appear rather less in diameter than they really are. All the columns incline inwards a trifle, and the faces of the architrave, frieze, tympanum of pediment, and stylobate all have a similar inward inclination. This helps to give that pyramidal appearance to the Parthenon, which is one of its most charming characteristics.”² There can be no doubt that the peculiar graciousness of the form and outline of the Parthenon is largely due to the use of these subtle devices which correct imperfections in our own way of seeing things. They depend for

¹ *Principles of Athenian Architecture*, p. 23 (original edition, p. 20).

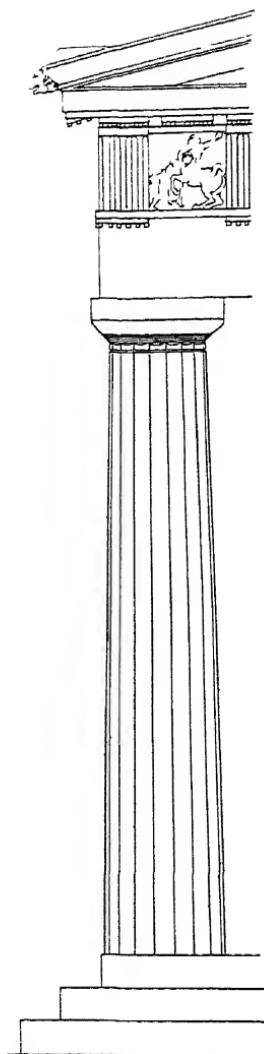
² *History of Architectural Development*, p. 92

their efficacy on a singularly acute observation of optical effects and of the laws of beauty

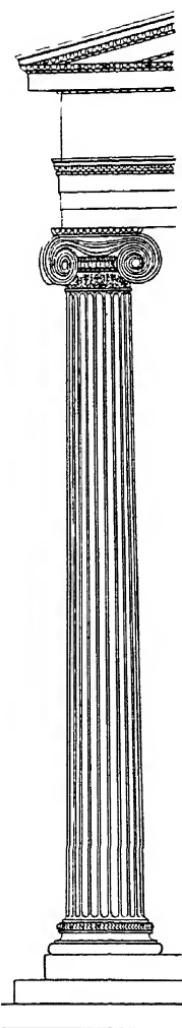
These subtleties of construction are not confined to the Parthenon, though not found in all Greek temples. The presence or absence of some of them appears to depend not on knowledge, but on the character of the stone of which the temple is built. The inward inclination of walls is found in the Theseum and Erechtheum and in the Propylaea. The curvature of long horizontal lines is found in the Theseum and the Propylaea. It is not found in the temple of Apollo at Bassae or in the temple of Aphaea in Aegina, and the reason is probably the difference of the stone used. The Theseum and the Propylaea, like the Parthenon, are built of Pentelic marble, the temple in Aegina and the temple at Bassae are of limestone, and neither the yellow limestone of Aegina nor the grey limestone of Bassae is a suitable material for such delicate workmanship as the graduated curves require.

The Three Orders of Hellenic Architecture.—The Parthenon is described as a *Doric* temple. The distinction of three orders, or styles, of Greek architecture is primarily a distinction of columns. It is usual to speak of the three orders as wholly distinct and to praise the Greeks for refusing to contaminate one order with another. Greek standards of taste did not tolerate a mixture of styles. This statement, however, needs qualification. The Parthenon is wholly *Doric*; the Erechtheum and the Temple of Victory are *Ionic*. But in the Propylaea, the columns of the porticoes, front and back, are *Doric*, the flanking pillars on either side of the central road of ascent are *Ionic*. The Temple of Apollo the Helper at Bassae again shows a combination of *Doric* and *Ionic*, the external pillars were *Doric*, the internal *Ionic*. Strangely, also, in this temple there was found a single column of the *Corinthian* order. It stood at one end of the cella, towards the South.¹ It is not, therefore,

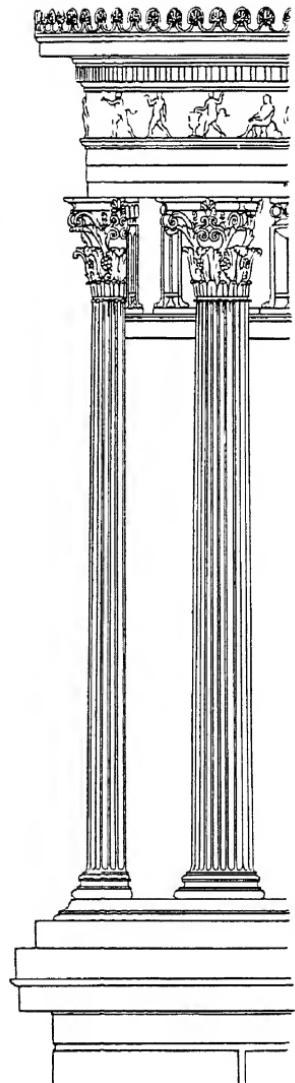
¹ Alone among Hellenic temples the temple at Bassae faces North and South instead of East and West. For the ultimate fate of this Corinthian column, see below p. 502.



DORIC



IONIC



CORINTHIAN

ORDERS OF GREEK ARCHITECTURE

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true that the Doric and Ionic styles are always kept rigidly separate. In the Propylaea and at Bassae the contrast of the Doric and Ionic pillars must have been one element of beauty. It is, however, quite true that the three types are clearly distinguished and that the distinguishing characters of the styles are never mixed in the same column, or system of columns.

The characteristic features of the Doric column are three.

- 1 The pillars spring from the stylobate without other base
- 2 They are relatively solid and taper from below upward
- 3 They are surmounted by a simple form of capital, consisting of the rounded *echinus* crowned by the square *abacus*

The contrasting characters of Ionic are

- 1 The pillars have bases more or less ornate
- 2 They are more slender than Doric and do not taper
- 3 The capitals are *volute*, that is are folded over in the form of a double scroll with other incidental ornamentation

Doric and Ionic both attain their perfect development in the fifth century. The third order, the Corinthian, is later, appearing only in the fourth century.

Its developed characteristics are

- 1 Elaboration of the base
- 2 Increase in height of column
- 3 Use of the acanthus leaf pattern to decorate the capital

The last is the readiest distinguishing mark of the Corinthian style, as the volute is of Ionic and the square abacus of Doric.

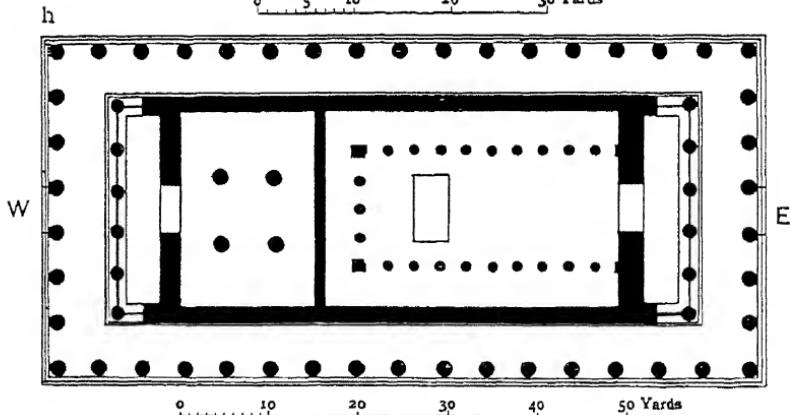
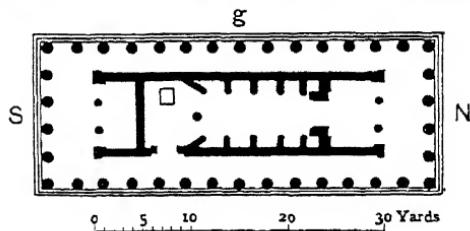
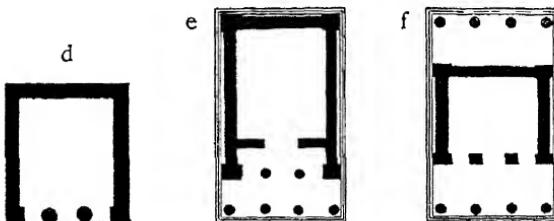
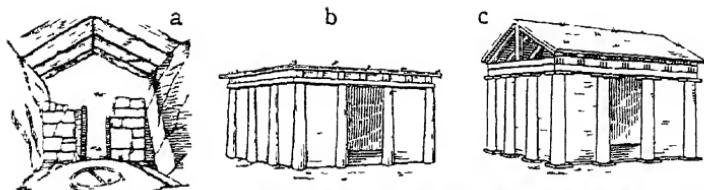
The best Athenian example of a temple in the Corinthian style was the Temple of Olympian Zeus as completed in the second century A.D. The Corinthian style was in fact more Roman than Greek. Earlier examples of Corinthian, or of innovations leading to the Corinthian style, are seen in the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates (above, p. 98).

and the Tower of the Winds. The earliest known example of a Corinthian column is the pillar at Bassae already mentioned. Corinthian may with some justice be considered as merely a development of Ionic. The contrast is mainly between Ionic and Doric. We see pure and unmixed Doric in the temple of Apollo at Corinth—of which only seven columns are now standing—and in the temple of Poseidon at Paestum. The most complete and splendid example of a purely Ionic temple was the temple of 'Diana of the Ephesians,' the Artemisium at Ephesus—fourth century successor to the Artemisium, of which Xenophon's little shrine at Scillus was a diminutive copy.¹

There are differences also in the arrangement of the entablature in Doric and Ionic temples, which are readily seen in the diagram facing p. 451.

Origin of the Orders.—The origin of these two contrasted styles and of the Greek temple generally is a speculation of great interest, but it is not easy to reach sure conclusions. On the one hand there is the supposition that the Greek temple was derived by conscious adoption and imitation from Asia and from Egypt (some features from the former, others from the latter), successively through Minoan and Mycenaean tradition. And beyond doubt we have in the discoveries of Schliemann at Mycenae and of Sir Arthur Evans and other archaeologists in Crete, strong evidence of intercourse between Egypt and Crete, and between Egypt, the Isles and the Peloponnese. This is the newer hypothesis, strengthened, as naturally it has been, by the great achievements of archaeology in the last fifty years. On the other hand there is the older theory that the Greek temple in its characteristic features was developed on the mainland of Greece by the peoples ultimately known as Hellenes. It is necessary in any consideration of the subject to bear in mind the purpose of a Greek temple and how this differs from the purpose of a Christian church. The Greek temple was thought of literally as the god's abode, the place where the image of

¹ See above, ch. xii. p. 341.



EVOLUTION OF THE GREEK TEMPLE

a Grotto in Delos *b* and *c* Conjectural early temples with wooden pillars *d* Distyle temple *e* Prostyle temple *f* Ampliprostyle temple *g* Temple of Apollo at Bassae *h* The Parthenon

[*a* after Bell, *b c* after Fletcher, and *d e f* Simpson]

the god was sheltered and preserved in honour. The ancient Greeks never assembled inside a temple for congregational worship as we go to church. The temple began then as a simple shelter, or hut, for the reception of the carved image of the divinity, such as may often be seen in an Indian village—four walls with the idol dimly glimpsed within. There is one such primitive shelter surviving in the island of Delos, a grotto formed by roofing in the sides of a rocky gully with slabs of stone and adding a doorway at one end¹. From simple structures such as this temples like the Parthenon and the Artemisium were gradually evolved, as men's desire to do honour to the gods and lavish adornment on their dwellings found scope through advances in wealth and artistic skill. First a couple of pillars were planted on either side of the doorway, then a row of four. This is a *pro-style* temple, a temple 'with pillars in front'. Next similar pillars are added in rear, and it becomes *amphi-prostyle*, a temple 'with pillars at both ends'. What first suggested the colonnade of pillars on all four sides we cannot say. Colonnades are a feature of Minoan architecture and traces of a colonnade on three sides of a courtyard are found at Tiryns. When the colonnade is added, the temple becomes *peri-pteran*, or 'winged-about'. The Parthenon is both *amphi-prostyle* and *peri-pteran*. The temple is the walled building within the colonnade and is technically spoken of as the *cella*. In the Parthenon the *cella*, as we have seen, is double—the eastern and larger chamber is the shrine for the image of the goddess and therefore in a more special sense the *cella*; the western chamber is a storehouse for the temple treasure. At either end, as we have seen, is a portico, the *pronaos*, or foretemple, at the eastern end, the *opisthodomos*, or back-chamber, at the western. There may even be a double surrounding colonnade as in the Artemisium at Ephesus and the Temple of Olympian Zeus at Athens. But to the end the Greek temple remains in essence a glorified hut, the function of which is to receive and shelter the image of the god.

¹ See Bell, *Hellenic Architecture*, p. 59

Another interesting speculation, which again can hardly be settled decisively, is whether the shapely rounded pillars of the Greek temple were arrived at by gradually cutting away the corners of squared blocks of stone set on end (like a child's building 'bricks'), or by imitating in stone the trunks of trees, which are themselves natural pillars. A good deal may be said for either view.

Certain peculiarities in the pillars of the Heraeum at Olympia (accepted as the oldest Greek temple of which remains survive), suggesting the probability of an original wooden system,¹ taken with Pausanias' own statement that one of two pillars in the back-chamber was a wooden pillar in his time, are striking evidence pointing to the derivation of Greek temple columns from tree-trunks. Against this derivation is the fact that the pillars of Doric temples of earlier date—at Corinth, for instance, and Paestum—are shorter and thicker than those of later date, instead of being relatively slender, as we should expect if they were imitated from tree trunks. There can at all events be no doubt that certain other features of Greek temples are *made intelligible*, if we suppose that the stone-work imitates and replaces wood-work. The triglyphs, for instance, gain significance, if regarded as representations in stone of the ends of wooden beams, carved with grooves as a simple form of decoration. The architrave, as the very name implies, represents in stone the main beams which support a roof. What are called *guttae*, that is 'drops,' which in stone seem meaningless, are explained, if they are recognized as imitations in stone of wooden pegs which originally served to fasten the roof-timbers in position. There is no need to settle these questions dogmatically, probably neither view can be fully proved. On the whole the evidence supports the view that the Greek temple was in the main developed independently by the Hellenes, but owed some features to Egyptian and

¹ See below p. 493 (ch. xviii). The *variation* there noted is explained, if we suppose that all the pillars were wooden originally and that stone pillars were substituted at different dates, as one by one the wooden pillars rotted and had to be replaced.

Asiatic influences, and that in the construction of the Greek temple the use of wood preceded the use of stone

The Doric temple was evolved on the mainland of Greece, the Ionic on the coast of Asia Minor, so the history of the two orders is not identical. The slender form of the Ionic pillar and the character of its flutings (deep and narrow with a band between, in contrast with the sharp edges of the Doric flutings) agree better with derivation from wooden models. But its most characteristic feature, the volute of the capital, can be clearly traced to Asian sources.

The Secret of the Greek Temple.—The foregoing analysis and exposition do something, it may be hoped, to answer the question with which this chapter started—what is the secret of the beauty of the Parthenon? The analysis of the constituent elements in the structure of the Parthenon and the examination of the relation of the parts to each other, and most of all the exhibition of the subtler devices by which those who built it softened and corrected the impressions of the senses, do surely enable us to understand why architects and artists, and other competent judges, find this wonderful beauty in the Parthenon and praise it in unqualified terms of admiration¹. Perhaps more still might be revealed, if we could understand all that Vitruvius meant when he said that the Greek temple depended for its beauty on the observance of subtle laws of proportion reduced to a science by Greek architects. Modern students have devoted great pains to the search for these laws of proportion, have invented formulas and written treatises to expound them². The result is not

¹ Sir James Fergusson writes of the Parthenon “for intellectual beauty, for perfection of proportion, for beauty of detail, and for the exquisite perception of the highest and most recondite principles of art ever applied to architecture, it stands utterly and entirely alone—the glory of Greece and a reproach to the rest of the world” (Vol I p 253). Similarly Gardner (p 271) speaks of “the exquisite combination of strength, simplicity and grace, which distinguishes it beyond all buildings preserved to us from antiquity.”

² See, for instance, the report of Mr. Jay Hambidge’s lectures in the *Journal of the Hellenic Society* for 1920 (p. xxxvii) and 1921 (p. xix).

very convincing. When mathematical ingenuity has done its utmost, there seems something in symmetry and beauty which eludes the most recondite mathematical investigation.

One other element in the effect produced by Greek temple architecture is simpler and more readily intelligible. The sensuous effect of the Greek temple depends in part on the physical facts of climate and scenery. It has been well observed that the most beautiful of the Greek temples would not produce the same effect, if taken out of their setting and planted down in a modern park or city. This is a circumstance which was overlooked by the enthusiasts of the Renaissance, who initiated the movement for what is known as Renaissance architecture, that is, the reproduction of the detail of classical architecture in Christian churches and in public buildings. The readiest means of testing the result is to compare St Paul's Cathedral with Westminster Abbey on the one hand, and with the Parthenon on the other. St Paul's in London (and St Peter's in Rome still more), are impressive from their vastness. It is open to doubt whether either strictly attains to beauty. It may safely be asserted that many Renaissance buildings in London offend by their incongruity with their surroundings.

So, for the peculiar delight which Hellenic architecture can convey at its highest, you must travel to Greece, and see the wreck of the Parthenon against the brilliant light of morning (or, if you are very fortunate, framed in a double rainbow above the Acropolis), you must climb the rough mountain track from Andritsena till, over the last rise, you catch a glimpse of the "Stelous" under the open sky.

CHAPTER XVII

ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE II

“ The Greeks alone have been unique in sculpture what survives of Pheidias and Praxiteles, of Polycleitus and Scopas, and of their schools, transcends in beauty and in power, in freedom of handling and in purity of form, the very highest work of Donatello, Della Quercia, and Michael Angelo.”

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

“ . beauty, as discovered and felt by the Greeks, has an immortal virtue, a flame-like efficacy for the spirit, which cold erudition cannot supply.” WARRACK, *Greek Sculpture*, p. xxxi.

“ My quiet, great-kneed, deep-breasted, well-draped ladies of necessity, I give my heart to you ! ”

R L STEVENSON, *Letters*, Vol I p. 91

ART, like literature and theology, is a subject on which every human being claims the right to an opinion. And yet on no subject is there more need for instruction, if one cares about holding right opinions. Without question there is such a thing as natural good taste, and some people naturally form right opinions in literature and art. But even such fortunate people really need study that they may know the reasonable ground of their opinions, and have something firmer to stand upon than an instinctive judgment that they are right. It is true also that conventions play a great part in aesthetic judgment, sometimes rightly, but often irrationally. Now no one should be asked to admire the Elgin Marbles, or the Parthenon, merely because a succession of competent judges has pronounced them to be works of art of a splendour unsurpassable, or because the painter Haydon, or the sculptor Canova, or the great art critic and man of letters John Ruskin, has used about them the language of exalted admiration. If a young student, boy or man, can go into the Elgin Room and at first see nothing but

chipped and defaced fragments of sculptured stone, he is not to be blamed. But if he is wholly without curiosity and indifferent, when he is told what great artists and men of action have felt and thought and written about these fragments, he is certainly open to blame. And if, shunning this blame, he returns and gives more careful attention to the fragments in the Elgin Room, and to what besides he can readily learn of Greek sculpture and architecture, there is a strong probability that his mind will begin to work as the minds of other well-endowed human beings have worked before him, and a new world of wonder and beauty will gradually be unfolded to him.

So it is worth while in this chapter to return to the Elgin Marbles and give a little time to their more careful examination. For they are affirmed to be the most splendid relics of Greek sculpture left to us, and they illustrate the doctrine that sculpture in its first and most appropriate use is associated with architecture and almost a branch of the larger craft. There were two clearly distinct uses of sculpture among the Greeks—the one was the beautifying of their temples, the other was embodying in some lasting material ideal representations of the human form, divine beings in human shape first, and then mortal men of a god-like beauty or fame. The total wealth created by the Greeks in these two kinds of sculpture, temple decoration and statuary, was once very great—great beyond computation. This we know from Pausanias and Pliny and Lucian and other literary sources. Between the fifth century B.C. and the second century A.D., eastern Europe and Italy and western Asia became, from generation to generation, more and more filled with masterpieces, and copies of masterpieces, of Greek sculpture, and of metal work, especially bronzes, like sculpture. Of this vast wealth little indeed compared with its former richness and abundance remains to us, but that little is of inestimable value, and is sufficient in amount to form no inconsiderable part of the heritage of art to which we are born. Its value is so great, whether measured in terms of sheer enjoyment, or viewed as

material for the training of aesthetic judgment, that it is worth some effort to attain an understanding and appreciation of Greek sculpture

The Appreciation of Greek Sculpture.—There is but one way to reach a full appreciation of this wonder, and that is to see the actual handiwork of the masters of the great age. Books and illustrations, photographs, engravings, will do a great deal, and casts will do more, but however good and however beautiful photographs and casts may be (and some are very beautiful), photographs and casts are but a poor substitute for marble statues and reliefs. For the *Hermes* of Praxiteles you must go to Olympia, for the *Bronze Charioteer* to Delphi, for the *Victories* of the *Nikê* balustrade to the Acropolis Museum, for the *Dying Gaul* and the *Laocoön* to Rome, the *Aphrodité* of Melos (Venus of Milo) and the *Victory* of Samothrace are in the Louvre. But for all this—in the rooms of Greek sculpture in the British Museum, in the very heart of England, there are opportunities for a first-hand study of Greek sculpture so ample and complete that it is difficult to speak of them in moderate terms.

Greek Sculpture in the British Museum.—If you turn left on entering the Museum and traverse the length of the galleries beginning with the Gallery of Roman portrait sculpture (Roman Gallery) till you come to a descending flight of stairs, there is one gallery of sculpture in which are crowded *casts* of *all* the most noteworthy classical statues from archaic *Heras* and *Apollos*, dating from 800 B.C., to the finest work of imperial Roman times, a thousand years later. *All* the best-known masterpieces are there. *Harmodius* and *Aristogerton*, Polycleitus' *Doryphoros* (Spear-Bearer), Myron's *Discobolos* (Quoit-thrower) and *Marsyas*, the *Victory of Paeonius* and the *Victory of Samothrace*, the *Hermes* of Praxiteles; the Cnidian and the Melian *Aphrodité*, the *Dying Gaul*, the *Niobé* group, the *Laocoön* group, the *Apollo Belvedere*. All these are *casts* not marbles, and that makes an immense difference: no one could guess the winning qualities of the *Hermes* at Olympia from the cast

in the British Museum. An even more pertinent consideration is that few of the statues from which these casts are taken are the original masterpieces, they are mostly skilful copies of famous masterpieces made to gratify the connoisseurship of rich Roman collectors long after the sculptor's own day. So it is on the whole with disappointment that we come away from these reproductions of famous statuary. Not one of them possesses the mysterious quality by which genius in a masterpiece impresses itself upon us, as the Hermes at Olympia does, as do the horses of the Pheidian frieze and the Victories of the *Nikê* balustrade. The treasure of the British Museum is not here, in the Gallery of Casts.

But in the rooms of architectural sculpture it is very different, the Room of the Nereids, the Phigalean Room, the Mausoleum Room, and most of all, and out of all comparison, the Elgin Room. In the Elgin Room you can see more great original Hellenic sculpture than anywhere else in the world, Athens alone, perhaps, excepted. For among sculptured Greek temples the Parthenon had the grandest pediment groups, and metopes which are not only more numerous than those of any other known temple, but also of finer workmanship. The Parthenon frieze is by far the most elaborate, the most perfect in design, the most skilfully executed. And, as we saw in Ch. III., large part of the frieze, the best preserved of the metopes, and nearly all that remains of the pediment groups are in the Elgin Room. We will take these three kinds of decoration in order, beginning with the frieze.

The Parthenon Frieze.—The Panathenaic frieze, as we have seen,¹ is inside the colonnade which surrounds the Parthenon, but outside the temple it forms a border along the top of the cella wall and passes on above the inner columns of the eastern and western porticoes, it could only be seen from within the colonnade itself. What distinguishes this frieze from all other temple friezes is, firstly, the large unity of design, the subject is one and continuous, not broken into sections.

¹ Vol I p 60

as in most friezes. It was a happy thought of the artist, whether Pheidias or another, who hit upon the design of the Panathenaic procession—it was a large enough subject to fill the space (though its length is not far short of 200 yards), and yet was charmingly diversified, and it was exactly appropriate to the shrine of Athena. Secondly, there is the matchless perfection of workmanship, and, thirdly, the rich variety of the details. It represents—not with matter-of-fact exactitude, but with the freedom demanded by a work of art—the whole Panathenaic procession, from the assembling in the Outer Ceramicus to the delivery of the peplos at the shrine of Athena Polias. For a right understanding of the detail of the frieze reference to the actual ceremony is necessary, though it would be a mistake to cite the frieze as conclusive evidence on a point of archaeological nicety. All classes joined in the procession, priests, magistrates, knights, maidens and youths, citizens and foreign residents. All these we see in the frieze taking appropriate part in the procession, and besides these there are four-horse chariots—a great number of them—and oxen and sheep for sacrifice. Finally at the east end is the conclave of the gods, seated in curiously easy and detached attitudes, a study in repose.

The whole frieze, with the exception of the fifty feet altogether lost, is to be seen in the Elgin Room arranged in order along the walls, though the arrangement does not conform to the actual shape of the Parthenon. Where the original slabs remain on the walls of the Parthenon itself, or have been taken to some other place than England, the gap is supplied by casts, but close on half of the original frieze is actually in the British Museum. It has always to be borne in mind that the slabs were not sculptured to be seen as we see them in London, but as they were seen on the Parthenon itself, that is at a height of 40 feet from the ground. The method used took careful account of this consideration: this is why very shallow relief is used, never more than two inches deep. Had the relief been deeper, since all the light came from below, shadows would have been thrown from the lower portions upon the upper.

For the same reason the whole surface is tilted forward slightly in its upper part

A tour of the room begins best at the western end of the frieze. There you see the young horsemen, the knights, flower of the noble youth of Attica—some preparing to mount, some just mounted and holding in their steeds, and in front of these, for half the length of the northern side, the stream of gallant youths riding off in loose order to form ranks and join in the procession, at once the most spirited and the most skilfully diversified part of the frieze. The prancing horses—one hundred and twenty-five have been counted—each of them individual and different from all the rest, are in most effective contrast with the processional calm of the figures further on. Chariots come next, with their teams of four horses and their two occupants, the fighting man with spear and shield trained to leap down from the car and back again while the chariot is in motion, and the long-robed charioteer. Next in front of these you see a group of Athenian citizens in easy conversation, and beyond these you overtake in succession musicians with lyres, musicians with pipes (four of each), youths carrying wine-jars, one of whom is resting (a specially graceful group), men carrying trays of cakes. Then come the animals for sacrifice, oxen and sheep, and this brings us to the corner where the north side meets the east. Here we come upon the procession of maidens accompanying the peplos. Most of them carry vessels and other sacred objects, the two foremost are empty-handed, it is pleasant to think of them as weavers of the peplos. This procession of maidens is received by two officials, and beyond again is another group of citizens, who possibly represent high officers of state. We are now close to the scene in which the theme of the frieze culminates—we are in presence of the gods (though they must be supposed invisible), six of whom, Aphrodité, Artemis, Apollo, Poseidon, Hephaestus, and Athena herself, face the procession from the north side, six, Zeus, Hera, Ares, Demeter, Dionysus, Hermes, that from the south. Eros stands at his mother Aphrodité's knee, and behind Hera

and Ares is a female figure, which is probably Iris¹. Between the two groups of deities stands a priest receiving a great mantle from the hands of a boy-attendant. This must be the peplos. It has been brought to Athena's temple, and is now to be hung upon her image. The procession coming from the south side is very similar to that now described, but there are differences of detail. The more noticeable are in the sacrificial animals and in the grouping of the cavalry. On the north side the victims for sacrifice are oxen and sheep, on the south cattle only. And in the southern frieze the cavalry are represented in somewhat more regular formation. In contrast with the varied scene of preparation and the mounted men riding off in a continuous stream, you have the massed effect of cavalry advancing rank behind rank in orderly array. There is vigour and variety and a splendid vitality in what is left of these horsemen of the south frieze, but it is the horsemen of the north frieze that are the crowning achievement of Pheidias' great design. They are truly "without rival or parallel in the world's art"². The very poetry of movement has in them received living expression perpetually renewed. The eye passes again and again over the changing throng of curveting horses and gracefully balanced riders. It is as when we watch water flowing over a weir, or the Atlantic ground-swell breaking upon Cornish rocks—fascinated we gaze on, and never weary of delight.

The Metopes.—Not much can be usefully said here of the metopes. Of the original 92 only about half survive at all, and some of these are disfigured beyond recognition. There are 15 original panels and 5 casts in the Elgin Room. All but two of these come from the south side of the Parthenon and represent Centaurs fighting Lapithae and carrying off Lapith women. From the existing evidence it appears that the Marriage of Peirithous and the Fight with the Centaurs formed the subject of the

¹ The identifications are those of the *Short Guide to the Sculptures of the Parthenon*, pp. 30-32. Only six of them, Hermes, Zeus, Hera, Athena, Hephaestus, Ares, can be regarded as practically certain, the rest are disputable.

² *Short Guide*, p. 35.

metopes on both long sides of the Parthenon (north and south), duplicated with differences much as the procession is in the frieze, that the subject on the east front was a Battle of Gods and Giants, on the west a Battle of Greeks and Amazons. All three may be regarded as variations of one theme, the struggle between a higher civilization and a lower, between Hellas and Barbarism.¹ The metopes of the Parthenon have not the grandeur of the pediment sculptures, nor the beauty of the frieze, but the best of them are fine bold work. In contrast with the frieze they are in high relief. The metope form greatly restricts the artist's opportunities, as there is not space for more than two figures in each panel, and treatment cannot be continuous. The sculptor's skill consists in diversifying the incidents within these limiting conditions. The subject is, of course, one of the common-places of Greek sculpture and it is interesting to contrast the metopes with other examples. There are three such in the British Museum, two friezes and a pediment group. The readiest comparison is with the frieze of the temple of Apollo at Bassae, which is in the Phigalean Room. Reproductions of the other frieze, the frieze of the Theseum, and of the west pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, will be found in the gallery of Casts.

The Pediment Groups.—When all considerations are duly weighed the frieze of the Parthenon is the most valuable work of sculpture that has come down to us from antiquity for the greater part of it actually survives in fair preservation and nearly the whole can be reconstructed with the help of drawings made by Carrey in 1674 (before the Venetian bomb had done its evil work) and by Stuart in 1751, while the best preserved slabs are nearly perfect and of surpassing beauty. There can be little doubt, however, that originally the most splendid work of all was

¹ See Murray, *The Sculptures of the Parthenon*, Chapters IV and V, for full discussion. Indeed to a right understanding of the Parthenon sculptures Murray is indispensable, and see especially his opening pages (pp 1-7) for the relations to each other of frieze, metopes, and pediments, and for the unifying purpose of the scheme of sculptural decoration as a whole.



PICTURES K, L, M, FROM THE EAST PEDIMENT OF THE PARTHENON
From a photograph in the collection of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies

that of the pediment groups. It may be difficult to recognize this now on a first introduction to the fragments of sculpture, disposed as far as possible in their true relations of position and distance along the two sides of the length of the Elgin Room. Unfortunately there is no full description of the groups extant dating from early times. Pausanias barely mentions the existence of the sculptures and supplies the names of the subjects—the *Birth of Athena* for the eastern group, the *Contest of Athena and Poseidon* for the western. We have the further help of the drawings made by Carrey in 1674. At that time there was more of the west pediment group left than of the east, and so Carrey's drawings are specially helpful in the reconstruction of the western group. But it was the western group which suffered most at Morosini's hands and now more is left of the eastern group. It is, also, the more interesting. It is from the figures brought to the British Museum from the two ends of this pediment that the modern estimate of the beauty and majesty of the pediment sculptures of the Parthenon is mainly drawn. For all the central figures of the eastern pediment have absolutely perished and what is left of the western pediment is little more than wreckage.

The Eastern group.—Of the group in the eastern pediment, besides the horses' heads already spoken of (above, p. 79), there are in all seven figures, four on the left, three on the right. All but one are headless, and the one remaining head, the head of the 'Theseus,' is badly damaged. There is an astonishing effect of ease and dignity about the two seated figures on the left, Demeter and Persephonê.¹ The grace of the reclining male figure next them on the same side,² the suggestion of vigour in repose, is unsurpassable. And yet the charm of the three draped female figures,³ which occupy the corresponding positions on the right, is more overpowering still. The gracious beauty of

¹ E and F in fig. 11 on p. 14 of the *Short Guide*.

² D in fig. 11.

³ K L M in fig. 13, p. 16. See illustration on the opposite page and the quotation from R. L. Stevenson at the head of the chapter.

these figures combined with an irresistible impression of more than human dignity is what most of all compels wonder and admiration. These mutilated figures of a broken group, even by themselves, without the mighty central figures which gave the key to their meaning, make an incomparable masterpiece of composition. And yet the central figures, being the most important of all, were probably the most splendidly executed. They are missing from Carrey's drawing, and Pausanias fails to supply the hints which would have given us some ground of certainty. Nevertheless it is possible by sympathetic imagination to reconstruct this part of the group with some plausibility. Zeus must have been there in the centre, for it was from his cleft forehead that the goddess leapt forth fully armed, as Hesiod sang.¹ Hephaestus must have been there, for it was his axe which cleft open the head of Zeus and freed the goddess to her birth. Athena herself must have been there, and in such form and place as to impress beholders with the splendour of her divinity, for the Parthenon is her temple and its sculptures were dedicated to her glory. It is therefore probable that she stood next to Zeus on the right, armed in full panoply.

The Western Group.—Though less of it is actually left to us now, the *Contest of Athena and Poseidon* can be restored with greater confidence. This is chiefly because of Jacques Carrey's drawings. Without Jacques Carrey's sketch the detached fragments now to be seen in the British Museum would give no idea whatever of the subject, but the drawing gives a clear and vivid impression of the grouping, and with its help the fragments, formless as some of them are, readily fall into their places. The story illustrated is the dispute between Poseidon and Athena for the first place in the affections of the Athenian people and the prior right to be regarded as the tutelary deity of Athens. The moment seized by the sculptor is that immediately after the creation of the olive, the miracle by which Athena made good her claim. Athens was to be adjudged to whichever of the two bestowed on the land

¹ Vol. I. pp. 41 and 42.

the greater benefit Poseidon with a stroke of his trident created the salt spring, symbol of Athenian sea-power, and took one step forward, preparing to seize his prize. Then Athena smote the ground in turn and created the olive, significant of the ancient wealth and power of Athens before her sea-power grew great. and Poseidon starts back discomfited. The other figures in the group are mostly matter of uncertain conjecture, doubtless they were all persons of local and mythological significance. For four or five names are suggested with much probability. The youth whose recumbent form fills the left-hand corner¹ may well be the river Cephissus, balanced by Ilissus and the fountain Callirhoë, the figures in the opposite angle². Next to Cephissus come a pair of figures, the only figures in this pediment which have survived how gladly would we know if they are, as has been suggested, Cecrops and one of his daughters³. Near the centre was the chariot of Athena with the splendid horses which Morosini coveted for Venice, and destroyed in the attempt to remove. Behind these horses was a male figure, possibly Hermes. Beyond Poseidon on the right-hand side, we may infer with certainty there was another chariot and horses, Poseidon's, though even in Carrey's drawing these are missing. Poseidon's charioteer is in all probability Amphitritë, his queen: a dolphin may be seen under her feet, as she sits.⁴ The running figure beyond Amphitritë, balancing Hermes on the left, may be Iris. The intermediate groups on each side are obscure Demeter, Persephonë, and the boy Iacchos is suggested for the group of three in Carrey's drawing on the left.⁵ There was evidently more vigour and more variety in this western group, but it has not the majestic loveliness of the eastern.

Other Pediment Groups.—There are two chief criteria of the merits of architectural sculptures such as these. (1)

¹ A in fig. 16 on p. 19 of the *Short Guide*

² V and W in fig. 19, p. 21.

³ B and C on p. 19

⁴ O in fig. 18, p. 21

⁵ D E F in fig. 15, p. 18.

the beauty of the several figures individually, (2) the grouping of the figures as a whole. By both of these standards the pediment sculptures of the Parthenon must be put in a class by themselves. There are no ancient sculptures of equal harmony and beauty; it is difficult to think of any modern sculpture to compare with them. Their higher excellence is strikingly brought out by a comparison with other surviving pediment groups, of which enough is left for the purpose. The groups that readily come to mind are two only, the Aeginetan Marbles and the pediment sculptures of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.

The Aeginetan Marbles, casts of which¹ have been set up in the Archaic Room at the British Museum in correct pediment form, are the groups from the temple of Aphaea in Aegina.² Each represents a fight between Greeks and Trojans. There is a sturdy energy in the figures individually, but a glance shows that compared with the Parthenon sculptures these groups are formal and stiff. There is but one figure which touches the feelings, the bearded warrior in the eastern group wounded to the death; all the rest leave us cold.

The probabilities point to a date not long after 480 B.C. for these Aeginetan sculptures. The pediment groups from the temple of Zeus at Olympia, which are believed to be not many years later in date, show considerable advance in technical skill, but these also are stiff and ineffective compared with the freedom and grace of the Parthenon figures. Reduced models of these pediments may be seen in the Gallery of Casts. The inartistic formality of the arrangement of the Oenomaus group in the east pediment hardly needs pointing out; the figures on either side of Zeus and the two four-horse chariots balance each other too exactly. There is more life in the west pediment group, which is another example of the Centaur-Lapith story, with Theseus and Peirithous in

¹ The originals are at Munich.

² Aphaea is a little-known goddess, worshipped in Aegina. She appears to have been associated with Artemis.



FIGURE *a*

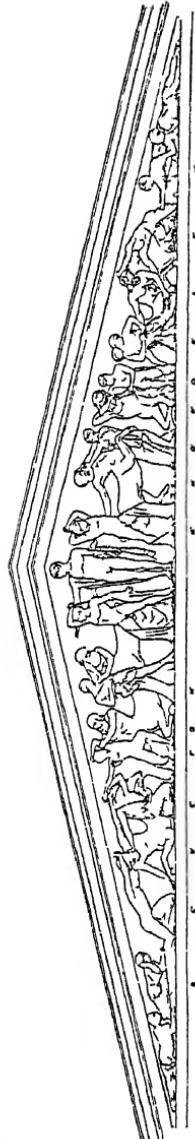


FIGURE *b*

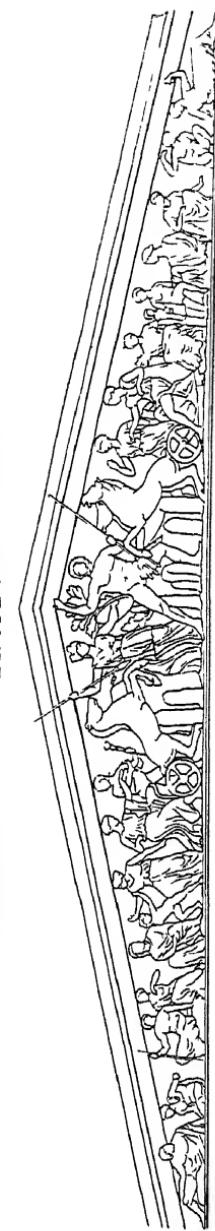


FIGURE *c*

RESTORED PEDIMENT GROUPS

For comparison,

a First Pediment of the Temple of Aphrodite, Aegina

b West Pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia

c West Pediment of the Parthenon,

a and *b* are from Professor Gardner's *Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, *c* is from a photograph in the collection of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies.

the leading rôles. Here we find more variety and more vigour. One incident, in particular, catches the attention from its sheer savagery—a young Lapith has thrown his arm round the neck of one of the Centaurs, the Centaur has fixed his teeth in his assailant's forearm and holds it with his hands so that it cannot be withdrawn. But neither of the principal figures gives any great impression of beauty or power, while the Apollo who stands in the centre as arbiter of the fight is merely conventional. These Olympian sculptures, like the Aeginetan, do but bring into relief the higher art and more moving beauty of the Athenian.

Metopes and Friezes.—The superiority of the Parthenon metopes is not so decided. The metopes from the temple of Zeus at Olympia, badly as they have suffered, show livelier imagination, though not, perhaps, equal technical skill. Their subject is the *Labours of Heracles*. All are characterized by a refreshing boldness of treatment, in one or two there is a subtle suggestion of humorous intention. What else is the quiet mockery of Atlas' holding out apples to Heracles, when with Atlas' load on his head he is unable to move a hand? Or the edifying vigour with which the divine hero wields a broom at his task of cleansing the Augean stables? Twelve slabs depicting twelve labours have been found, but some are very badly mutilated. The best are in the Louvre, the rest in the Museum at Olympia. Only three, that is to say, casts of three, are in the British Museum, but one of these is the delightful Heracles and Atlas.

For comparison with the Parthenon frieze we have in the British Museum three contemporary, or nearly contemporary friezes—the frieze of the Nikê temple, the frieze of Phigalean Bassae, the frieze of the Theseum. The whole of the frieze from Bassae is in the Phigalean Room, a portion of the Nikê frieze—4 slabs out of 14—is in the Elgin Room; casts of the Theseum frieze are found, one part (the eastern frieze) in the Elgin Room, the other (the western) in the Gallery of Casts. None of these friezes approaches the scale of the Parthenon. The largest of the

three, the frieze from Bassae, is a little over 2 feet high and just 102 feet in length. The Parthenon frieze was over 520 feet long, 3 feet 4 inches high. The beauty of the *Nikê* frieze places it high for workmanship, but its scale is insignificant—just 18 inches high. There is abundant vigour in the execution of the Phigalean frieze, and as it ran along the top of the side walls of the cella and the cella was hypaethral or open to the sky, its bold and deep relief must have shown up well in the sunlight, but it is curiously rude, and even in places clumsy, work compared with the Parthenon frieze. The battle of Centaurs and Lapithae takes up not quite half of it, the rest is a conflict of Greeks and Amazons.¹ The frieze of the Theseum is closely comparable in style with the Parthenon metopes, but does not approach the beauty of the Parthenon frieze. The friezes which most nearly rival the perfection of the Parthenon frieze—so far as may be judged from the fragments left of them—are not contemporary but of later date, the friezes of the Mausoleum. The Mausoleum was the monument built in the fourth century B.C. for Mausolus, her husband, by Artemisia of Halicarnassus, a later Artemisia than the Artemisia whom Xerxes honoured.² The remains of this monument, which has given the word mausoleum to the English language, fill most of the space in the Mausoleum Room. There are two friezes. Of the one the subject is a battle of Greeks and Amazons. How fiery is the vigour and how tender the pathos of the best of these³ can be seen in the Mausoleum Room. They express, as no other representation of the Amazon legend does, the horror of merciless physical combat between men and women. Whether these splendid young Amazons are dealing lusty blows with sword or battle-axe at their male opponents, or with steadfast eyes and face uplifted wait undaunted their

¹ For an account of the finding and recovery of this frieze see chapter xviii pp 500-502

² See Herodotus, viii 69 and 88

³ See especially 1014, 1022 and 1006 (slabs 9, 17 and 1) in the Mausoleum Room

conqueror's death-stroke, the sculptor seems to compel our sympathies to side with them even against the national Hellenic cause. The other frieze illustrated a chariot race. There is one figure from this, unfortunately badly mutilated, which bears comparison with the loveliest of the Elgin Marbles—the Mausoleum Charioteer. Style and spirit are different, showing the character of another age than that of Pheidias : the figure is beautiful with a difference, but not less beautiful.

The History of Greek Sculpture.—To trace in detail the history of Greek sculpture is quite beyond our purpose here, but the main outline is simple and it is possible to indicate briefly the points of chief interest. Sculpture distinctively Greek is generally dated from the sixth century B C. It then appears sporadically at many centres on the mainland, on the coast of Asia Minor, and in the islands of the Aegean. Several of the islands—in particular, Chios, Samos, Naxos, Paros, Thasos, Crete—came early into note as centres of artistic activity. The antecedents of this Hellenic art go back into a distant past during which influences from beyond Greece, and especially from Egypt and Asia Minor, undoubtedly made themselves felt. Twice the artistic impulse had risen to a high point, first in the far distant past called Minoan ; secondly in the age of which the Homeric poems give, or purport to give, a picture. But how crude were the beginnings of Greek art in sculpture, before and during the sixth century, may be seen in the early sculptures found at Selinus in Sicily, in the Pre-Persian pediment sculptures dug out of crevices in the Acropolis rock, and in the archaic statues of all kinds in museums. It was far below the level attained in very early times by the Egyptians, and markedly inferior to the best Assyrian reliefs. During the sixth century these scattered endeavours became focussed in two contrasted styles or schools, which (once more) follow the race distinction of Ionian and Dorian. The Ionic school shows, as we should expect, the characteristic Ionian tendencies, excess of the softer graces and richness of decoration. It centred first in Ionia and later

at Athens, where its softness was corrected through the influence of the more virile Doric School. The Doric or Peloponnesian School, which with its greater strength and firmness showed a certain hardness and want of charm, came to a climax in the Argive School. The Argive School concentrates its efforts on portraying in bronze or marble the manly athletic form. The fifth century, the great century in architecture and sculpture as well as in literature and in national life, begins with this contrast of Athenian and Argive Schools. But the two schools mutually influence each other, and out of this reciprocal influence came the art of the great Hellenic sculptors. This interaction of the schools can be illustrated by great names. Ageladas of Argos was the foremost master of the Peloponnesian style towards the close of the sixth century, and Ageladas was the teacher of Polycleitus and Myron and Pheidias. Polycleitus perfected the Argive style, it was transmuted by Pheidias into a higher beauty. Myron gave his own individuality to the Argive type without attaining to the high ideality of Pheidias. The rapidity with which Greek sculpture advanced from the stiffness and hardness of the Aeginetan and Olympian pediments to the perfection of the Parthenon sculptures is itself great part of the marvel. And the impetus which gave fifth century sculpture its grandeur did not cease with the century. Hellenic sculpture of the fourth century, if we may draw conclusions from the scanty data we have for judgment, was scarcely a less glorious achievement than fifth century. It had less ideal grandeur, but a gracious beauty which was more divine than human. Praxiteles was its greatest master, no mean rival of Pheidias. Scopas, a slightly older contemporary of Praxiteles, gave to marble a life-like intensity which was alien to fifth century canons, but brought new power to sculpture. Lysippus of Sicyon continued, though he could not excel, the more limited achievement of Polycleitus. Hellenistic sculpture follows. It goes beyond Hellenic in the range of emotion to which it appeals, and in its delineation of human suffering. It rises to a height at Pergamos and Rhodes.

The one school gives us the *Dying Gaul*, the other the *Laocoön* group. The sculptor of the *Laocoön* was Agesander of Rhodes, we get the name from Pliny the sculptor of the *Dying Gaul* is not known. The Hellenistic period, as distinct from the Hellenic, is reckoned as lasting down to about 100 B.C. from approximately 320. It has no names to equal Polycleitus, Pheidias, Scopas, and Praxiteles. Graeco-Roman sculpture continues the Hellenistic tradition without any fresh breath of life¹ down to the first half of the fourth century A.D., when Constantine transferred the capital of the Roman empire to Constantinople and made Christianity the state religion. And then, with the dissolution of the religious beliefs in which it was grounded, Greek sculpture died a natural death. There was no supremely great name again in sculpture till Michael Angelo, over a thousand years later.

Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture.—The whole period during which Hellenic sculpture flourished and was held in high estimation throughout the western world, both popularly and by the most cultivated portion of mankind, was something like eight hundred years (B.C. 450 to 350 A.D.), though it was for little more than two hundred years (from 450 to 250 B.C.) that the original work on which the claim of Greece to supremacy in sculpture is founded was being produced. Indeed the greatest works of all the masterpieces whose almost superhuman excellence was famed throughout the Graeco-Roman world, are all included within a period of not much over a hundred years, from 450 to 330 B.C. The great masters of highest rank are six only: three in the fifth century B.C., Polycleitus, Myron, Pheidias, three in the fourth, Scopas, Praxiteles, Lysippus. After these come a host of lesser sculptors, some like Alcamenes and Paeonius, whose work is known to us, others who are merely names and reputations. There must be a vastly greater number whose names are not recorded at all. Pausanias gives us

¹ The vivid individual portrait sculpture which Roman taste introduced does, however, constitute a new departure, it was unknown to Hellenic art.

some idea how full Greece was of glorious sculpture in the second century A.D. At each city to which he comes in his travels—in Phocis, in Boeotia, in Attica, and throughout the Peloponnese—he describes one by one the temples and enumerates with descriptive touches and mythological elucidations the works of art. All Greece on his showing was, as Gardner puts it, ‘a vast museum.’ It must have been much the same throughout the flourishing Greek cities of Asia Minor and Syria, and in the Greek cities of Italy and Sicily, though outside Greece proper there would be more works of inferior masters and more ‘copies.’ At Rome, as late as the middle of the fourth century A.D., there were counted “four thousand bronze statues, apart from marble statues too numerous to be counted, and over 150 statues of more costly material, gilt and chryselephantine images of gods and 22 large equestrian statues.” Pliny, in the last five books of his *Natural History*, in dealing with metal and stone, takes in hand to enumerate and sometimes describe the most remarkable works of art in bronze and marble existing in his time, and so becomes a mine of information to us about Greek sculpture and sculptors. From Pausanias and Pliny combined we get an overpowering impression of the large amount of notable sculpture existing when they lived, and of the marvellous perfection of the most celebrated masterpieces. And if now, approaching our subject from this new standpoint, we ask how much of what Pausanias saw and Pliny describes has come down to our day, the answer is surprising.

Of original works of great masters, apart from temple sculptures, that is to say single statues and groups of statuary, very few indeed are left. You may count them on your fingers. In fact there are only *two* works of which we can say with complete confidence that in them we look upon the authentic work of one of the great masters, the *Hermes* of Praxiteles and the *Victory* of Paeonius. And Paeonius is a master of second rank. There are, it is true, a good many other statues which may fairly be called ‘originals,’ though the names of the sculptors who made

them are not known, or not known with certainty. The *Victory of Samothrace* is one such, so is the *Dying Gaul*, and the statue found at Subiaco and called the *Kneeling Boy*, possibly also the Niobé group. Nor can any sharp line be drawn between statues and architectural sculptures. The Mausoleum was a building and its sculptures may therefore all be described as architectural, but the figures of Mausolus and Artemisia are clearly statues. Yet when all this has been taken into account, and account has also been taken of the 'copies' which are of a quality to give some just impression of the genius of the masters whose work they reproduce, the sum of all surviving Greek sculpture is very little compared with the wonderful wealth which Pliny and Pausanias describe. How was this wide and almost universal destruction brought about?

Dispersal, Destruction, and Recovery of Greek Masterpieces.—The destruction was a long-drawn process still going on when, early in the nineteenth century, Lord Elgin learnt from his Turkish householder on the Acropolis that some of the Parthenon sculptures had recently been pounded up to make mortar. The Romans began it, when Mummius set his soldiers to lay hands on precious works of art at Corinth and stipulated with the contractors commissioned to convey them to Rome, that any article destroyed was *to be replaced by another of equal value*. Oppressive governors like Verres, and art-loving emperors like Caligula and Nero, plundered Greece of her artistic treasure to beautify their palaces in Italy, and for centuries many of the most famous Greek masterpieces of sculpture were to be found in Rome. But as these works of art were only removed from one place to another, not injured or destroyed, such depredations did not diminish the sum total of excellent sculpture in the Graeco-Roman world. Nor was it otherwise when in the fourth century A.D. Constantinople took the place of Rome, and a large portion of the artistic riches of Rome was removed thither. This was still dispersal, not destruction; but indirectly it led to destruction, through the great conflagrations which occurred both at Rome and Constantinople,

several masterpieces are known to have perished in this way by fire. The age of the Antonines is probably the time when the world was fullest of noble Hellenic sculpture, of masterpieces and copies of masterpieces. This continued with little alteration up to the middle of the fourth century A.D., when the note of the bronzes and statues in Rome quoted above was made. A little more than half a century later Rome itself had been sacked by Alaric's Goths (A.D. 410), with successive barbarian invasions and the frequent pillage of the towns, the destruction of works of art had begun and proceeded apace. But in the long run a far more widespread and searching influence tending to banish from the earth the glory of Greek sculpture was that decay of the old religion which had already set in when Euripides was writing his plays. When a new and eagerly militant faith took the place of uneasy scepticism, the moral confusion at the heart of paganism soon led to its utter rejection as a system of belief. For the time being Christianity was necessarily inimical to Greek art. The old religion was first neglected, then persecuted and the art of sculpture, intimately bound up as it was with the old religion, came under the ban. Interest in art as one of the glories and joys of life became less and less. Men and women ceased to care for material beauty as something good and delightful in itself, lifting the mind above sordid and petty things. Simultaneously wars, invasions, devastation, the immigration of horde upon horde of alien races at a ruder stage of culture, all contributed to a lowering of life and the disintegration of the old order. Floods, earthquakes, epidemic fevers, played their part in what was nothing less than the ruin of civilization. In an utterly changed world art at last counted for little or nothing. "Works of art gradually lost their value as creations of the mind, and their destruction commenced whenever the material of which they were composed was of great value, or happened to be wanted for some other purpose more useful in the opinion of the possessor" ¹. To take but one

¹ Finlay, *History of Greece*, 1. 191

example, in the reign of Anastasius I a number of very fine bronze statues were melted down to make a statue of the emperor. Of the last stage Professor Gardner writes "When bronze and marble had become more precious in themselves than the art which had found in them the means of perpetuating its noblest ideals, the fate of sculpture was sealed. Bronze, not to speak of more precious metals, was ruthlessly melted down, and even marble was burnt to produce mortar—the lime kilns upon every classical site record the fate of the statues that once peopled it."¹ For a thousand years and more Greek sculpture almost dropped out of men's recollection.

Human interest in Greek sculpture begins again in the fifteenth century. It was then that, in new-found enthusiasm for classical literature, great ecclesiastics and noblemen in Italy began to make collections of antiques. The Capitoline collection was begun by one Pope in 1471, the Vatican by another in 1506. The marbles recovered for these collections were sometimes found by accident, sometimes by eager search on the sites of palaces and villas, one at Tivoli, another at Antium, many at Rome—on the Esquiline or Palatine hill, or in the bed of the Tiber. The Niobé group was found in a vineyard near the Vatican. The fashion of collecting spread from Italy to France and England. The first English collection was the Arundel Marbles (now mostly at Oxford), made in the reign of Charles I by the nobleman of that name. But up to the beginning of the nineteenth century these collections contained hardly anything of first-rate value. With scarcely a single exception the marbles were "not originals but Roman copies of Greek works of the most different periods. The major part was the work of artisans, in which it is hard to discern the character and charm of the originals. Even the famous Apollo Belvedere is only distinguished from others by the comparative excellence of the reproductions."² The true recovery of Greek

¹ Gardner, *Handbook of Greek Sculpture*, p. 6

² Michaelis, *A Century of Archaeological Discovery* (translation by Miss Kahnweiler), p. 8

sculpture begins with the Elgin Marbles. It was completed, so far as completion was possible, by the more and more systematic exploration and excavation on Hellenic soil which has gone on since Hellas became again a free country. It is going on actively now, though with diminishing probability of finds to equal in value the *Hermes* of Praxiteles, the *Victory* of Paeonius, or the *Charioteer* of Delphi. Luck naturally has played a part little less decisive than the industry and sagacity of archaeologists. A fox's 'earth' led to the discovery of the *Phigalean* frieze¹. A peasant in the island of Melos chanced upon broken fragments of a marble statue out of which the *Aphrodítē* of Melos was pieced together. Another *Aphrodítē*, now in the British Museum, came from the ruins of sea-baths at Ostia.² The *Cerigotto* bronze, a male athletic statue which rivals the work of Polycleitus and Lysippus, was recovered by sponge-fishers out of thirty fathoms of water near the little island from which the statue takes its name, out of a wreck which had lain there for full two thousand years. There is many a romantic chapter in the story of this recovery of the spirit of Hellas expressed in its marble statuary.

Hellenic Pre-eminence in Sculpture.—The more carefully judgment is weighed, the stronger probably will be the conclusion that the energies expended, whether with spade or pen, in winning back for mankind these relics of a splendid skill which has passed away, are well worth while. The *Hermes* of Praxiteles seems to have been restored to us to give us some measure of the greatness of our loss. For the *Hermes*, though it appears to those who have seen it a miracle of perfect workmanship, was by no means in ancient times regarded as Praxiteles' greatest work, nor did he himself so esteem it. Modern judges see in it the very embodiment of divine excellence in human shape. But from report we know that in the great days, when Greek sculpture was most a living art, there were other embodiments of the divine which produced a far more overpowering impression on men's minds—the

¹ See below, p. 501

² Numbered 1574 in the Ephesus Room

Zeus and the Athena of Pheidias, the Hera of Polycleitus. Pausanias, to whom we owe it that we are able to identify the Hermes as Praxiteles' work, makes nothing special of it, he merely describes it briefly and passes on. One of the very finest modern critics of Greek sculpture points out how "among all the sculptures which have outlived the ravages of time and the destructive fury of man there is perhaps not one that was admitted in Greece as of the highest rank"¹ This appears on reflection to be true in the main, and yet we have the Elgin Marbles, the Victories of the temple of Athena Nikê, and the Hermes! And that these sculptures are of transcendent merit seems to be admitted beyond question. We can ourselves see that they are. What then must have been the full perfection of Greek sculpture at its best! There can have been nothing like it on earth before or since, for even "the haphazard residue of fragments" which we now possess excels all other sculptured works of ancient or modern times. One may in the British Museum get a forcible impression of the amazing difference between Greek and other ancient sculpture if one approaches the Elgin Room, not through the Roman portraits, but through the great Egyptian hall. From among weird monstrous shapes of Assyrian man-lions, and colossal Egyptian kings with heavy features seated in rigid posture, you look across the room of the Nereids and see through the opening beyond—like a vision from another world—the long lithe shape of the 'Theseus'.

Why the Greeks among all the nations of the earth attained—almost at a bound—to this unapproachable primacy in sculpture must to the end of time appear partly mysterious. But it can to some extent be made intelligible by consideration of the general and special conditions under which the marvellous advance between the Persian and the Peloponnesian wars was made. The general conditions are the same as those which help to explain Hellenic greatness in other spheres, architecture, drama, state-craft, history: the intensified national

¹ Warrack, *Greek Sculpture*, p. xix

consciousness after the repulse of the Persians, the elation of victory over a powerful enemy and of deliverance from a great danger Athens felt this most of all, hers had been the greatest peril and the most heroic effort This exalted national consciousness gave the grandeur of outlook and the inspiration to high artistic achievement But there were more special causes which helped the peculiar development given to Hellenic art in general and to sculpture in particular Without doubt the supreme achievement of Hellenic sculpture is the delineation in stone of the perfect human form, of the athletic human frame primarily, and then of beauty of bodily form generally The Greeks above all other men, we might almost say, alone among the races of men, had an eye for the beauty of the natural body and a delight in contemplating that beauty. The perception of this beauty is part of their gift to the human race, no mean part of our Hellenic heritage The Greek put soul higher than body, but he had an inspired vision of the beauty of the human body, both male and female He did not *say* man's body is the temple of the Living God, but his attitude towards it might reasonably be expressed in these words With proper safeguards and restraints this respect for, admiration of, delight in, the well-shaped and well-proportioned human body is not evil but good, not demoralizing but in a high degree moralizing Edmund Spenser expresses the truth exactly :

" Of all God's workes, which doe this world adorne,
There is no one more faire and excellent
Than is man's body, both for power and forme,
Whiles it is kept in sober government "¹

Now at the Olympic Games in the fifth century B.C. the Greek competitor, contrary to our own customs and the customs of every other race, barbarous or civilized, entered for their athletic contests without a stitch of clothing on Thucydides expressly says, that this custom had come in shortly before his own time, and that

¹ *Faerie Queene*, II ix 1. 1-4.

previously competitors in the Games had contended *girt* with a loin-cloth. Similarly all exercising in the gymnasium and the wrestling-ground in Greek cities was done stark naked. We are not concerned here with the expediency or inexpediency of this custom, but manifestly it was of extraordinary advantage to Greek artists, and above all to sculptors. The Greek sculptor as a citizen of Athens or Argos could be present daily in the palaestra and gymnasium and had opportunity of observing the athletic body in every imaginable posture and movement. The Greek sculptor, as has been pointed out, did not need models to pose to him in an Art School. The models were daily, almost hourly, before his eyes in the civic exercising-grounds of his native city. The advantage for the sculptor of this familiarity with the naked human body in energetic action and in repose can scarcely be exaggerated. Along with this interest in and admiration of the human bodily form, and these opportunities for observation and study, went the Greek belief in bodily exercise as a chief source of health and his balanced ideal of a healthy body. These conditions coming together produced the unique greatness of Hellenic sculpture. It is, perhaps, sufficient reason why no later sculpture, especially of the nude figure, has ever yet quite equalled the Hellenic, that these conditions have never been exactly repeated.

CHAPTER XVIII

TRAVEL AND DISCOVERY

“Few men there are who having once visited Greece do not contrive to visit it again”

MAHAFFY, *Rambles and Studies in Greece* (5th edn.), p. 1.

OUR consideration of Greek architecture and sculpture has brought us back to the charms of travel in Grecian lands. A final chapter given expressly to this subject will not be outside the purpose of this book. For familiarity with the actual land of Greece, its mountains and the seas that wash its coasts—either by travelling ourselves or by reading the travels of others—is part of the full enjoyment of our Hellenic heritage. These experiences are ours if we will. Especially interesting are the experiences of the early travellers from the West, who made journeys to Greece, when Greece was still a land to be discovered, and who put on record accounts of their adventures and successes.

The Separation from Western Europe.—Athens, and through Athens Greece, remained the intellectual centre of Europe down to the time (330 A.D.) when Constantine removed the imperial court to Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople and made the capital of the Roman empire. From that day a divergence began which ended in the complete separation of western Europe from direct Hellenic influences. The young western nations looked to Italy and the Papacy for light and leading, till in the fourth Crusade (1204 A.D.) Constantinople appeared to the soldiers of the West a foreign city with an alien faith. In 1453, when Constantinople was captured by the

Turks, the Greek lands became part and parcel of the Turkish empire, and were more than ever cut off socially and economically from the rest of Europe; but with this other consequence, which was to have momentous results for western Europe and the world, that a new knowledge of Greek literature was communicated to Italy by Greek men of letters who came to the western peninsula as fugitives from the Turk. Italy passed on the new learning to France, France to Spain, Germany and England. With the acquisition of this knowledge of Greek and the revelation of the splendours of Greek literature, the men of the West began to desire to see the Greek lands.

The Earliest English Travellers.—After the painstaking itinerary of Pausanias in the second century A.D. the literary record of travellers in Greece is for a long time very meagre. For many hundred years, we might without exaggeration say for 1500 years, even literary allusions—outside the pages of Byzantine historians—are few and scanty. Among the writers who speak of Greece are a few travellers from the West, for instance Kiriacus of Ancona in 1447, Louis des Hayes in 1632, and the Jesuit Père Babin, 1672. The first Englishman whom we know to have eagerly desired to see Athens was John Milton. He has himself related how in the year 1639 his purpose of visiting Greece was frustrated “When I was desirous to cross into Sicily and Greece the sad news of Civil War in England called me back, for I considered it base that, while my fellow-countrymen were fighting at home for liberty, I should be travelling abroad at ease for intellectual culture.” Thirty years later another young Englishman, born just two years before Milton’s visit to Italy, educated at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford, Francis Vernon by name, started (“out of an insatiable desire of seeing,” as he himself puts it) on a journey to eastern lands which ended in his death by violence near Ispahan in Persia. A little before his untimely death this Francis Vernon had written a letter to a friend at the Royal Society (of which Vernon was a Fellow), from which it appears, that besides making a two months’ stay in

Athens, he had visited Corcyra, Zante, Thebes, Corinth, Argos, Sparta and Delphi. At Athens, though the ignorant suspicions of the Turks made investigation difficult, he nevertheless succeeded in making a study of the Parthenon and took some measurements. His letter, dated January the 10th, 1676, merely gives the outline of these travels, but refers also to the journals which he had kept. These are in the possession of the Royal Society and have never been published. At the time of Francis Vernon's death, Sir George Wheler, whose *Journey into Greece*, published in 1682, is the first book of Greek travel in English, was on his travels along with the Frenchman, Spon. Wheler, at the time a young graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford, had spent two years in travelling on the Continent, then in 1675 started from Venice with Dr Spon, whose acquaintance he had made on his earlier journeys. Spon and Wheler went first to Constantinople, then travelled for a year in Asia Minor, visiting among other places the sites of the 'Seven Churches,' including Smyrna and Ephesus. They then crossed the Aegean to Athens, and afterwards spent a year travelling in Greece. Wheler's later fortunes were very different from Vernon's. He returned safely to England towards the end of 1676, and lived to be a Canon of Durham and the father of eighteen children. He died in 1723.

Eighteenth Century Travellers.—After Wheler there is a long interval before the eighteenth century travellers begin. The first is a nobleman, Lord Charlemont, who in 1749 voyaged among the isles of Greece, made some stay at Athens and visited the Peloponnesus. Two years later Stuart and Revett went out to Athens with the help and encouragement of the Society of Dilettanti. They were at work there for four years, and the results of their work may be seen in the *Antiquities of Athens*, the first volume of which appeared in 1762¹. The next book of travels was Chandler's, published in 1776. Chandler was

¹ There are five volumes of the *Antiquities* in all, but only the first and second were published in Stuart's life-time. The fifth volume appeared as late as 1830.

a young Oxford scholar who had made his mark as a student of antiquity and was sent out along with Revett, the companion of 'Athenian' Stuart, and a young painter named Pars, by the Society of Dilettanti—to travel in Asia Minor and Greece and study antiquities. Chandler and his companions left England in June 1764 and first travelled for a year in Asia Minor, visiting the Troad, Smyrna, Miletus, Ephesus, Mt Mycalê, Mt Tmolus and Mt Sipylus. They went on to Greece in August 1765 and travelled widely both in Northern Greece and over the Peloponnese, returning to England in September 1766.¹

Early Nineteenth Century.—There were other eighteenth-century travellers, but it was not till the opening years of the nineteenth century that the impulse to systematic exploration reached its height. Then within a dozen years, between 1800 and 1811, Lord Elgin, Colonel Leake, Dodwell, Sir William Gell, Byron and his friend John Cam Hobhouse,² and the famous architect, Charles Cockerell, were all in Greece, travelling and exploring, each with a special purpose of his own, but with a common enthusiasm. What Lord Elgin did has been already considered (pp. 79 to 81), and the results form one of the great attractions of London to-day. Dodwell wrote a book in two volumes folio, which is more lively reading than either Chandler or Wheler, but is nevertheless rather heavy going. Gell's *Journey in the Morea* is a vigorous narrative, which aims chiefly at giving a picture of the country under the Turks before the rising of 1821. Leake's is by far the most solid work. He was a born topographer, and on every route which he followed in the Peloponnese or in Northern Greece he surveys and discusses every step of the way. The result is that his books, four volumes on Northern Greece, four on the Peloponnese, and two on Athens, are a mine in which

¹ The results of their labours appeared in the first two volumes of *Antiquities of Ionia* issued by the Society of Dilettanti.

² Afterwards Lord Broughton.

later travellers may dig, but they do not, except to enthusiasts and serious students, afford very exhilarating reading.

Byron and Hobhouse.—The most interesting of these travellers are certainly Byron and Hobhouse. Probably more of the spirit of Greek travel is distilled into certain stanzas of *Childe Harold*¹ than can be found in any prose narrative. No English poet, no English writer, except Sir Rennell Rodd in our own day, has caught the atmosphere of modern Greece, the combination of moving historical associations with enchanting physical beauty, as Byron has. Byron himself in a letter written in 1810² puts the enduring splendour of natural scenery higher, and perhaps Byron is right. But for the inheritors of Hellas the charm of classical associations is necessarily very great, and Byron felt it acutely, even while refusing to express enthusiasm over 'antiquities' and affecting a certain disdain of the raptures of professed students. Certainly Byron saw Greece under romantically fortunate conditions, as an English nobleman of high lineage, and at the same time a young man of genius about whose satirical poem *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* all London was talking when he left England. Ambassadors, British consuls, and captains of British men-of-war, made things pleasant for Lord Byron wherever he went. He began by traversing the wilds of Albania and paid a visit to Ali Pasha of Yanina at his country residence, Tepelene, where he was received with the utmost distinction by that formidable Albanian chieftain. He and Hobhouse visited Delphi, but they did not follow the ordinary route from Corinth or from Thebes. They set out from Vostizza³ in a boat manned by fourteen Greek seamen, sailed diagonally across the Gulf of Corinth to a point on the opposite shore, where their sailors, like the crew of an ancient trireme, anchored to cook their dinner.

¹ *Childe Harold*, ii 85-93

² Letter 136 in vol 1 of Prothero's edition of the *Letters and Journals*, p 265

³ Aegium

The rest of the voyage was performed with oars, not indeed the trireme's hundred and seventy-six, but just ten, and after the manner of ancient navigation they followed the turns and windings of the coast, till they reached the Scala, or port, of Salona (now called Itea) very late and by moonlight. If Byron sought romance, what could be more romantic! Of their inspection of Delphi next day the account is given by Hobhouse, not Byron (Byron disdained the 'scribbling' of travel notes), and he only writes. "On the whole anyone would, I think, be disappointed with the situation of this place, which is hidden in a nook, or a sort of natural amphitheatre, so as to afford a prospect neither of the depth of the precipice below, nor of the height of the rocks above"¹. Neither he nor Byron had any vision of the wonderful transformation that was to be brought about in another hundred years (see pp 494-6 below). From Delphi the travellers returned to Chryso and next day started for Livadhia, resting the next night at the flourishing village, Aráchova, four miles beyond Delphi under Parnassus. They journeyed on through Phocis and Boeotia to Attica and the Muse of romance again favoured them. For they had their first glimpse of Athens from the top of the Pass of Phylê, and entered the city itself at half-past eight on the evening of Christmas Day, 1809. Byron wrote afterwards of Athens—"a place which, I think, I prefer, upon the whole, to any I have seen". This was during a second stay in 1810-11, when he was by himself and made the Capuchin Convent his headquarters, while he toured from time to time in the Peloponnese. This first Christmas he and Hobhouse stayed ten weeks, making themselves very much at home in Athens and riding out almost every day into the country, till all Attica became familiar. In the spring of 1810 they went on in a war-ship to Constantinople, and it was on this voyage, while waiting till the Etesian winds would allow them to pass the Dardanelles, that Byron, to test the story of Leander, himself swam the Hellespont. It was

¹ Hobhouse, *Travels in Albania*, vol 1 p. 205

not quite literally from Sestos to Abydos, but across the Narrows between Kild-ul-Bahr and Chanak-Kalessi, the Castle of Romelia and the Castle of Natolia. The difficulty of the feat does not lie in the distance, which is not much over a mile, but in the swiftness of the current running from the Sea of Marmora to the Aegean. Byron made a first attempt on April the 16th (Hobhouse is precise in his dates) "Having crossed from the castle Chanak-Kalessi in a boat manned by four Turks . . . we landed at 5 o'clock in the evening half a mile above the castle of Chelit-Bawri, and my friend, together with an officer of the frigate, depositing their clothes in the boat, began their passage. We kept near them, and the boatmen gave them instructions from time to time as appeared necessary for them in taking advantage of the current. For the first half hour they swam obliquely upwards, rather towards Niagara Point than the Dardanelles, and notwithstanding all their skill and efforts, made but little progress. Finding it useless to struggle with the current, they then went rather with the stream, but still attempting to cross. We lay upon our oars, and in a few minutes were between the castles. The swimmers were close to us. We were not then half over the passage, and were every moment falling into a wider part of the channel, but notwithstanding the exclamations of the Turks the effort was still continued, and it was not until the swimmers had been an hour in the water and found themselves in the middle of the strait, about a mile and a half below the castles, that they consented to be taken into the boat." The successful attempt was made on May the 3rd. Profiting by the lessons of the first attempt, Byron and Lieutenant Ekenhead started from a point a mile further up the passage beyond Chelit-Bawri. "They swam upwards as before, but not for so long a time, and in less than half an hour were floating down the current close to the ship. They then swam strongly to get within the bay behind the castle, and, soon succeeding, reached the still water, and landed about a mile and a half below our anchorage. Lord Byron was one hour and ten minutes

in the water , his companion, Mr. Ekenhead, five minutes less ”¹

Conditions of Travel before 1830.—Of Athens in 1810 Hobhouse writes “ Were there no other vestiges of the ancient world than those to be seen at this day at Athens, there would still be sufficient cause left to justify the common admiration felt for the genius of the Greeks ” He makes light of the difficulties of travelling in Greece and says: “ Until within a few years, a journey to Athens was reckoned a considerable undertaking fraught with difficulties and dangers only a few desperate scholars and artists ventured to trust themselves among the barbarians, to contemplate the ruins of Greece. But these terrors, which a person who has been on the spot cannot conceive could ever have been well founded, seem at last to be dispelled Attica at present swarms with travellers ”² For all this it would appear that the earlier travellers even down to Hobhouse’s time had a good deal of discomfort to put up with and found Greek travel something of an adventure Wheler and Dr Spon began with a voyage in a ship the captain of which had recently been a pirate, and still kept up the habit of carrying off women who took his fancy , they started for home two years later under a lively apprehension of being followed by shot from the Turkish forts guarding the mouth of the Gulf of Corinth Francis Vernon was actually at one time made prisoner by corsairs, sold as a slave, and, as he writes, “ endured great misery ” in that condition. Dodwell had a real adventure with real brigands, a band of Klephths over a hundred in number, and only escaped with his life owing to the lucky arrival in the nick of time of a troop of Turkish horsemen On the other hand, the first comers had all the excitement of exploring undiscovered country. They had to identify ancient sites by the exercise of their wits with the help of the classical writers, not merely confirm, or combat, the identifications of those who went before them Sometimes, too, it was their fortune to light upon some temple

¹ Hobhouse, vol ii pp 194-5

² Hobhouse, i p 252-3.

or work of art not yet known to scholars. This could happen as near to Athens as Aegina, where the Aeginetan marbles were 'discovered' by a party of four travellers, two German and two English, one of the latter being the architect, Charles Cockerell.

Exploration and Excavation after 1830.—Systematic topographical research begins with Leake, and he and others advocated excavation as the best means of arriving at sure results. The era of excavation, however, comes only after the Greek war of independence. The travellers whom we have been considering so far came in Turkish times. The Turks were ignorant, quite indifferent to archaeology and all its works, though not always unfriendly or obstructive to classical students. But it was not till the country was free of Turkish rule that archaeological research could go forward under favourable conditions. The dividing-line is the decade 1820-1830. The Greeks (as we have seen) rose in insurrection April 6, 1821 (ten years after Byron's visit). The desperate struggle of the next nine years falls into three stages. (1) the first successes of the Greeks, sullied by cruel, and sometimes treacherous, massacres of Turkish prisoners-of-war, (2) the gradual reconquest and devastation of the Morea by the army of Ibrahim Pasha, brought over from Egypt for the purpose, (3) the ultimate intervention of France, Russia and England, leading to the recognition in 1830 of the independence of Greece. After a distracted interval of four years, Otho of Bavaria was accepted as first King of the Hellenes. One of the earliest cares of the national government was to create a department of Antiquities. Ludvig Ross (p. 59), under the title of Ephor-General, was the second chief of this department, and the Acropolis, which in 1834 ceased to be a fortress, was gradually cleared of all buildings later than classical. In 1837 a Greek Archaeological Society was founded. A good deal was discovered from time to time, but the great discoveries, some of which we have had occasion to notice, were the outcome of the systematic excavation of the whole surface of the Acropolis undertaken in 1882. By that date

memorable excavations had been carried out in other parts of Greece. The French Expedition de Morée had worked at Olympia and other places in 1829-30. The great discoveries of Schliemann at Mycenae had been made in 1876 (Troy was in 1871-5), and there were important finds in other parts of Greece. The work of the Greek Archaeological Society had been supplemented by archaeological institutes established at Athens by foreign Hellenists. The French School at Athens was the first of these institutions, founded in 1846, and next came the German founded in 1874. The British School did not follow till 1885, the American was three years earlier. Valuable work in exploration and excavation has been done by each of these. The greatest achievements—less only in their importance than the epoch-making work of Schliemann at Troy and Mycenae and Sir Arthur Evans at Knossos—have been the excavation of Olympia between 1875 and 1881 by the Germans, and excavation of Delphi between 1890 and 1900 by the French.

Olympia.—“At Olympia,” wrote Leake after his visit in 1805, “as in many other celebrated places in Greece, the scenery and topography are at present much more interesting than the ancient remains.” Clark, whose travels were fifty years later, writes. “Of all the monuments with which this famous spot was once crowded—so numerous that Pausanias devotes about one-eighth of his whole work to their enumeration—not a trace remains with the single exception of the ruins of the temple of Zeus. But for them it might have been doubted whether this were Olympia or not.”¹ Just what was to be looked for at Olympia we do know, as Clark says, from Pausanias’ detailed description occupying Books V. and VI. of his *Tour of Greece*. The greater part of those two books is indeed taken up with a history of the Olympic Games and an enumeration of statues, but Chapter X. of Book V tells of the sacred enclosure, or Altis, and of the temple of Zeus, Chapter XI of the gold-and-ivory image of Zeus, Chapters XVI to XIX. of the Temple of Hera. The French

¹ Clark (W. G.), *Peloponnesus*, p. 266.

in 1829, as their manner is, sent a scientific mission to the Morea, which spent six weeks on the site of the Temple of Zeus. "They cleared a great part of the stylobate, obtained an exact measurement of it, discovered the lowest portions of 13 columns in their places, and would probably have found more if they had completed their excavation. They brought to light, also, some remains of the metopes, of the pronaos and posticum, and had the satisfaction of observing that they are in exact conformity with the description of Pausanias."¹ Leake adds: "no remains of the sacred inclosure are now to be observed, though possibly its foundations may hereafter be found beneath the present surface."² But Leake also noticed a difference of level in the ground below the hill of Cronos and between the Cladeus and Alpheus, in particular, a "cliff or bank" traceable right across the valley and in one place as much as "25 feet high, and perpendicular." From this and other signs he conjectures "that in the course of the last fifteen centuries all the south-eastern extremity of the Altis has been destroyed by the river, and consequently that all the remains of buildings and monuments in that part of the Sacred Grove have been buried beneath the new alluvial plain, or carried into the river." This amounts to a belief that under "the fine turf carpeting the valley of Olympia," as he saw it in 1805, was lying—how deep could only be found by digging—the stone foundations of all the buildings which Pausanias visited in the second century A.D., and possibly remains of statues and temple sculptures, none could tell how much. This was the faith much earlier of Johann Joachim Wincklemann, author (among other works) of the *History of Ancient Art*, whose enthusiasm for Greek art marks an epoch in European speculation. Nothing was done during Wincklemann's life-time, nor for a century after his death, but in 1875, largely through the enlightened encouragement of Frederick, Crown Prince of Prussia, afterwards for a few months the Emperor Frederick, a comprehensive

¹ Leake, *Peloponnesiaca*, pp. 12 and 13

² Leake, *Peloponnesiaca*, p. 14

scheme of excavation was taken in hand by German archaeologists, with the consent of the Hellenic Government. The work went on till 1881, nearly £40,000 was spent on it, and the result was to restore the ground plan of Olympia as it may be seen to-day, "a grey chaos of scattered stones and pillar-stumps in a rich setting of green fields and sylvan scenery." But under Pausanias' guidance this chaos has gradually been reduced to order, and all the chief buildings have been traced out exactly as he describes them. From the platform of the Temple of Zeus the great drums of the temple pillars may be seen lying in rows, detached but retaining the columnar form, just as the earthquake of the 6th century A.D. shook them down.¹ The platform of the Heraeum can be made out close under Cronos hill, and enough of the pillars is left to enable us to verify the statement that no two pillars of the peristyle are exactly alike. They differ in size, in the number of flutings, in their ornamentation, even in their mode of construction, for, while most were built up of drums, one was a monolith. And so through all the series of buildings which Pausanias describes. It was on the platform of the Heraeum that the Hermes of Praxiteles, the one nearly perfect surviving masterpiece of Hellenic sculpture, was found. We owe its preservation to the fact that the upper part of the walls of the cella was built of unburnt bricks. The bricks, being merely sun-dried, in process of time crumbled and turned back into clay. It was in this clay that the Hermes was found imbedded, and it is because of the softness of this bed and its protective nature that the Hermes has suffered so little injury. The Hermes and the Victory of Paeonius alone make the pilgrimage to Olympia in these days worth while, but there is much other sculpture in the Museum there of great interest, and the physical beauty of the whole scene counts for much.

The Excavations at Delphi.—The scene at Olympia is one great recovery which the spade of the archaeologist has effected. The transformation at Delphi is even more

¹ See also Vol I p 38

wonderful. Wheler and Spon in 1676 had to assure themselves that Salona (or Amphissa) was not Delphi, and when they got to Castri, it was the situation and scenery which convinced them that the temple of the Pythian Apollo had been there, not remains of buildings visible on the site, though it is true that they found the name Delphi in one inscription. Dodwell, writing of the year 1805, actually remarks, "the remains of this celebrated edifice have vanished like a dream, leaving not a trace behind"¹ But he adds "It appears that the far-famed temple of Apollo must be sought for under the humble cottages of Castri, as the whole village probably stands within its ancient *peribolos*" This is how things still were when I first saw Delphi in 1888 I came from Thebes and Livadhia, and so approached Delphi along the mountain path through Arachova, and entering by the gorge of Castalia and the precipitous cliffs which tower above the valley of the Pleistus on that side Nothing could be more impressive But the site of the Delphic sanctuary and oracle was occupied by a ramshackle mountain village, very like one of the hill villages one sees in the Himalayas When I came a second time in 1899, it was as though a magician's wand had been waved over the scene The village of Castri had been shifted half a mile further west towards Chryso, and where Castri had been there lay extended beneath the Phaedriades the whole ground-plan of Pausanias' Delphi wrought in massive stone It is a marvellous transformation to eyes that once saw Castri perched in picturesque disorder above the ground where this great archaeological treasure-house has been disinterred The French have done their work skilfully and thoroughly The whole area has been cleared of the superimposed litter and each site that has been identified is marked by a neat wooden placard, inscribed in plain letters There are more than a score of these at different levels over the steep incline of the rock

A day on the site of Delphi is now a stimulating if exhausting experience The whole of the ground above

¹ Dodwell, *Tour Through Greece*, vol 1 p 174.

the carriage-road has been cleared by the French archaeologists. What has been revealed is nothing less than the complete framework of ancient Delphi, a skeleton indeed, but a nearly perfect skeleton. You ascend towards the temple of Apollo by the Sacred Way, a broad paved road of stone which starts not far from the basin of Castalia and runs across and back along the face of the rock towards the west. It is still in very tolerable repair. First you have on either hand the bases of statues of early kings of Argos, and of the Epigoni, offerings once dedicated by the Argives. You pass on your left the treasuries of Sicyon and Cnidos¹ from which came the most interesting sculptures now in the Museum, then the Theban treasury, and after a sharp turn to the north-east the treasury of the Athenians². Some little way higher up is the Stoa of the Athenians, and behind that you see a long stretch of polygonal wall pieced together with extraordinary nicety. The edges of the stones fit so closely as to make a seemingly continuous surface marked with a quaintly variegated pattern, though the stones are irregular in shape. This polygonal work surpasses in finish any masonry of the kind at Mycenae or Tiryns. The eastern end of this wall was used as a sort of public record office and is covered with inscriptions; it happened also that this space of wall was opened to view while most of the rest of Delphi was still concealed by the houses of Castri. Since the excavation it has been seen to form the outer face of the substructure supporting the platform of the temple of Apollo. The road sweeps past the end of this polygonal wall, then turns again and ascends to the temple platform. The platform and its substructure are all that now survives of Apollo's temple, but these serve to indicate how large and splendid the temple itself must have been.

Another striking feature is the Delphic stadium, an open race-course with seats on three sides in a state almost as perfect as if the Pythian Games had been recently held.

¹ The second of these two treasuries has also been assigned to Siphnos.

² See Vol. I p. 293.

there. The enclosure is a long oval, 220 yards in length, and about 60 broad. The course is smooth and level, the rows of seats rise symmetrically one above another; on the upper, or northern, side twelve rows, on the lower six, and six rows at the western end. There are seats too beyond the eastern end of the course, but these are not continuous with the rest and are not very well defined. Between the eastern rows of seats (which are cut in the rock) and the goal-line are four bases surmounted by niches, which probably held sculpture, and there is space for one more. The highest row of seats all the way round has a back of solid stone skilfully accommodated to the spectator's body for the ancient Greeks, as may be personally tested here and elsewhere, understood how to make chair-backs comfortable better than some moderns.

There were many other sites discovered in this restoration of Delphi, among them, a theatre, a Council-house, and the hall where Polygnotus' famous pictures were displayed. But the Sacred Way, the temple-platform, and the Stadium are the most interesting. The sculptures found during the process of excavation have for better preservation been removed to a museum building. Nothing so exquisite has been found here as the Hermes of Praxiteles, but there is much archaic sculpture of curious interest, especially the friezes from some of the treasuries, and competent judges put a high value on the bronze Charioteer.

The Gleaming Rocks.—There is one sight at Delphi, not the least remarkable, which owes nothing to archaeology. The cliffs which form the background of Delphi were in ancient times called the Phaedriades, or the Gleaming Rocks, and it is natural to ask why. You need to go to Delphi and watch the sun rise to be sure of the answer. But if you take your stand on the temple platform a little before sunrise, this is what you will see. As you watch, the sky gradually grows luminous above the cliff, and presently the edge of the rock seems to glitter along all its length, and a faint coruscation streams from it, which

slowly brightens and takes on gorgeous rainbow colours. Then, when the sun's glowing disc shoots its first direct rays over the top, the illusion vanishes. It is doubtless this peculiar coruscation of the edge of Hyampeia at sunrise which gave the rocks their ancient name.

Bassae.—The pleasures of travel in Greece—at least to him whom the Greeks called *Euzonos*, the 'well-girt man'—are inexhaustible in their combination of glorious scenery and stirring associations. And no journey combines these two sources of delight in fuller measure than an expedition to the 'Stelous,' as the Greeks call the place—that is 'the Columns'—at Bassae on the borders of Elis and Arcadia. Pausanias speaks of a temple of Apollo built by the men of Phigalea on Mount Cotilium, which he esteems the finest in Peloponnesus, second only to the Temple of Athena Alea at Tegea. The Arcadian shepherds knew it always,¹ but scholars, even those who read Pausanias, had forgotten it till in 1765 Joachim Bocher, the French architect, came upon it accidentally, when on a journey from Pyrgo to Karytena.² It is not the easiest of places to visit, but the reward to those who undertake the fatigues of getting there is great. Andritsena is, on the whole, the most convenient taking-off place. The march from Andritsena takes about three hours. What follows is the description of a visit made towards the end of March 1899.

"After a hot climb our path turns abruptly to the left and we skirt an immense ravine, the sides of which are great open slopes where multitudinous goats are feeding, both above and below. The scenery which has hitherto been rough and stern is softer here, and the bells tinkle melodiously. The watch-dogs bay deep and fierce as we go by. On the further side we find a welcome spring of cool water. After this we climb again by an even steeper

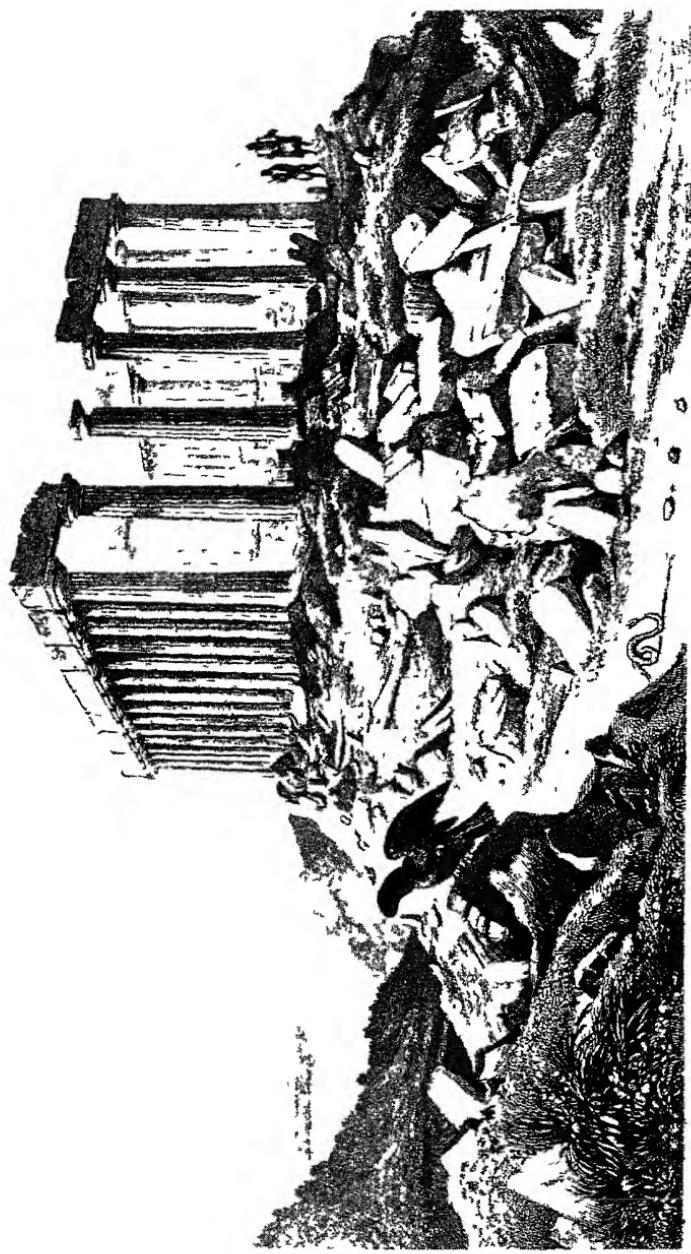
¹ Mr E F Benson has made effective use both of the 'Stelous' and the Arcadian shepherds in his novel *The Vintage*, which no one interested in modern Greece, land or people, should fail to read. See especially the frontispiece.

² Chandler, *Travels in Asia Minor and Greece*, p. 96.

and more rugged path. We twist deeper into the mountains which now begin to hem us in. We seem to be making for a dip in a long ridge that lies right ahead of us. Somewhat to the right is a big grey summit. We climb the ridge-wall, go over it, and, descending a little, come suddenly in view of ranged columns—the temple is before us.

“The Temple of Apollo at Bassae is, of course, a ruin. It stands gaunt and open to the winds, its roof, and all that stood above the architrave—friezes, pediments, triglyphs and metopes—are gone gone, too, its shrine, the inner walls and divisions and all that they contained, all that made it distinctively a place of worship—except for the broken fragments that strew the pavement, and some scanty remains of the walls of the cella. But for a ruin it is remarkably complete. Of the thirty-eight pillars originally surrounding it thirty-five still stand, and the blocks of stone that formed the architrave, stretching two-and-two from pillar to pillar, have suffered most at the southern end, which is exposed, the northern end being sheltered by the slope of the hill. Two of the pillars are somewhat clumsily strengthened with clamps and boards, and one on the west side is propped up in an unsightly manner with scaffolding. With these deductions the tale of pillars is complete. And here on the open hill side, in the solitude of great mountains, with a bold sweeping landscape on three sides, and no other company than the lizards and the tinkling sheep-bells far down on the lower steeps, you may enjoy moments that outlive whole years of humdrum experience.

“What a view it is that is offered to eye and mind from this place! Looking out upon it from a vantage point a little higher on the ridge, the temple of Apollo is forgotten and we are merged in the prospect of mountain, sea, and sky; majestically sweeping lime-stone ridges, line upon line, with glimpses of snowy summits through the gaps, and far away to the south and to the west the effulgent blue of the waters that lap the coasts of Greece. We are ourselves on the back of an open ridge,



THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO AT BASSAE FROM THE NORTH-EAST
Mount Ithomé and the Gulf of Coroné are seen in the distance

From an engraving in the Supplemental Volume to Stuart and Revett's *The Antiquities of Athens*

and mountain ridges hem us in all round. Behind to the north and west, the wall over which we have climbed, dominated by the grey summit of Mount Cotilum, closes up and shuts out any further view. More to the east and north, the heights of central Arcadia rise massively, through a small dip in the far distance a bit of snow-white Chelmos peeps up. Eastward we look over long ranges of rocky hills, which separate us from the valley of the Alpheus and the plain of Megalopolis. Westward there is a rapid descent, and through the gap we see a beautiful little stretch of coast with the sea a very deep blue beyond. But it is the view to the southward, opening before us as we came over the ridge, that first riveted our eyes and that draws them back. Straight in front, through a big dip in the hills, lies a long stretch of comparatively flat country, reaching to the curve of the Gulf of Coronê on the very margin of sight. On either side of the gulf the hills rise again and stretch further than our eyes can follow, on the right the hills of the Pylian land right down to Cape Gallo, on the left past Kalamata the highlands of Maina dimly out towards Taenarum. South-east but nearer, there is a big mass with four distinct peaks, called Tetrasi in modern Greek (hiding somewhere Eira, the stronghold of Aristomenes), and through the breaks in Tetrasi can be seen the long snowy stretch of Taygetus. In the very centre of this magnificent landscape, due South and in the middle distance, one object particularly arrests attention, a bold, square-shouldered, flat-topped hill, standing up steep and conspicuous above the Messenian plain. This is Ithomê, long held stubbornly by the Messenians in the war in which they first lost their freedom, and again seized by the revolted Helots in 464 B C and kept for nine years in defiance of all the efforts of Sparta."

That so much more of this temple survives than of more famous buildings is doubtless due to the reasons which Leake suggests—the loneliness of the situation, the difficulty of transport in such a country, and consequently the absence of temptation to turn the ruin into a quarry.

Such damage as has been done is probably due to earthquakes, which have occurred at one time or another all over Greece. The identification of the 'Stelous' as the temple of Apollo the Helper we owe entirely to Pausanias, who wrote "Kotilium is about forty stades distant from the city" (that is from Phigalea) "therein is a place called Bassae and the temple of Apollo the Helper, both the temple and its roof of stone" "Without those few words," remarks Leake, "the existence of such a magnificent building in such a wilderness must ever have remained a subject for doubt and discussion" Even as it is there is room for wonder at the beauty of the temple and its strange situation Leake himself says "That which forms on reflection the most striking circumstance of all is the nature of the surrounding country, capable of producing little else than pasture for cattle and offering no conveniences for the display of commercial industry either by sea or land. If it excites our astonishment that the inhabitants of such a district should have had the refinement to delight in works of this kind, it is still more wonderful that they should have had the means to execute them. This can only be accounted for by what Horace says of the early Romans :

' Privatus ilhs census erat brevis
Commune magnum

This is the true secret of national power, which cannot be equally effective in an age of selfish luxury" ¹

Recovery of the Phigalean Marbles.—The frieze from the cella of this lonely mountain temple is now, as we saw (above, p. 469) in the British Museum, the chief treasure of the Phigalean Marbles. The story of the recovery of this frieze is a good example of the romance of excavation. We have seen how M. Bocher first made known the existence of the temple in its remote solitude, but it was reserved for the Englishman Charles Cockerell, in company of four friends with whom he was making the tour of the Morea, to discover the frieze in 1811, three

¹ *Travels in the Morea*, vol. II p. 9

months after the discovery of the pediment sculptures in Aegina (p. 490). The party started from Zante (at that time in British occupation as one of the Ionian Islands), landed at Pyrgo and thence rode to Olympia. They approached the Stelous from Andritsena by the route already described Cockerell's own account of the discovery, or rather his son's, is worth giving in full "The interior of the temple—that is to say the space inside the columns—was a mass of fallen blocks of some depth. While Haller and Cockerell with the labourers were scrambling about among the ruins to get their measurements, a fox that had made its home deep among the stones, disturbed by the unusual noise, got up and ran away. It is not quite a pleasant task to crawl down among such insecure and ponderous masses of stone with the possibility of finding another fox at the bottom, but Cockerell ventured on, and on scraping away the accumulations where the fox had his lair, he saw by the light which came down a crack among the stones, a bas relief. I have heard this story also from his own lips Stackelberg further says that the particular relief was that numbered 530 in the Phigalean Marbles at the British Museum, and naively adds, 'indeed one may still trace on the marble the injuries done by the fox's claws' Cockerell managed to make a rough sketch of the slab and carefully covered it over again. From the position in which it lay it was inferable that the whole frieze would probably be found under the dilapidations" ¹

Local superstition and the desertion of the shepherds engaged to do the digging brought operations to a premature close that year. The party had to return to Andritsena and afterwards continued their tour. Cockerell gives a piquant account of the stay at Bassae "We spent altogether ten days there living on sheep and butter, the only good butter I have tasted since leaving England, sold to us by the Albanian shepherds who lived near

¹ *Travels in Southern Europe and the Levant, 1810-1817. The Journal of C. R. Cockerell, R.A.*, edited by his son, Samuel Pepys Cockerell (1903), pp. 75-76

Of an evening we used to sit and smoke by a fire, talking to the shepherds till we were ready for sleep, when we turned into our tent, which though not exactly comfortable, protected us from weather and from wolves. For there were wolves—one of them one night tore a sheep to pieces close to us ”¹ The restoration of the whole frieze to the light of day was not effected till next year, and then Cockerell himself was away in Sicily. His son writes “The party of excavators established themselves there for nearly three months, building huts of boughs all round the temple, making almost a city, which they christened Francopolis. They had frequently from fifty to eighty men at work at a time, and in the evening after work, while the lamb was roasting on a wooden spit, they danced.” The opposition of the local authorities was overcome by the powers obtained from Constantinople, but even so at the last the plan for the rescue of the frieze was almost brought to naught through a change of Governors. Veli Pasha had made terms satisfactory to himself, but the new Governor who had no share in the profit sent troops to stop the embarkation of the marbles. It was this which caused the loss of the capital of the one Corinthian column at Bassae (above, p 450) “Everything had been loaded except the capital in question, which was more ponderous than the rest, and was still standing half in and half out of the water when the troops came up. The boat had to put off without it, and the travellers had the mortification of seeing it hacked to pieces by the Turks in their fury at having been foiled ”²

These earlier triumphs of archaeology were only achieved at a great cost of endurance and not a little personal danger. Cockerell himself was ill of malarial fever in Athens and lay for weeks at the point of death. His Danish friend Bronstedt was robbed by brigands. Baron Stackelberg was carried off by pirates and barely escaped with his life. Cockerell writes also in one place ³ “For three weeks I had slept with my clothes on and with only one blanket to wrap myself in ” His name deserves to be remembered

¹ P 74² P 220³ P 101

among the other heroes of the archaeological renascence in Hellenic lands — Schliemann, Leake, Wheler, Chandler, Sir Arthur Evans and many another. The pioneers won their victories in face of danger and physical hardships of all kinds. The work of archaeology, let us remember, still goes on and needs support. In our time excavation has been raised to a fine art and the archaeological schools at Athens send out their bands of well trained explorers—Greek, French, American, German, British. All that is needed more is money. Willing apprentices will not be wanting, if funds are forthcoming. Successes as great as the greatest of the past can hardly, perhaps, be expected, though the wonder of Sir Arthur Evans and Crete shows how boundless are the prospects of the unexpected. We cannot all take part in the fascinating work of fresh discovery, but reasonable support of the British School at Athens and of the Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies is open to all. Homer has a beautiful word *threptra*, 'requital for nurture', all and any who become conscious of what they owe to Hellenic life and thought may claim this one privilege more, to pay back according to their means their portion in the great debt.

OUTLINE OF DATES

Dates in Literature or Art are indented, and the event is in Italics.

- B C** 404 Fall of Athens
The Terror under the Thirty.
403 Democracy restored
403-2 Archonship of Euthidas
401 Battle of Cunaxa Retreat of the *Ten Thousand*
400 The Ten Thousand reach the Black Sea
399 *Death of Socrates*.
397 Revolutionary plot at Sparta (Conspiracy of Cinaedon).
396. Agesilaus in Asia Minor
395 *Plato returns to Athens*
394 Corinthian War Battle at Corinth
Victory of Conon over the Spartan fleet at Cnidus
393 Long Walls of Athens rebuilt by Conon
392 *Aristophanes' Ecclesiazousae*
389 *Aeschines born*
388 *Lysias' Olympic Speech*
Aristophanes' Plutus
387 Peace of Antalcidas
386 *Plato's teaching in the Academy begins*
384 *Demosthenes born*
Aristotle born
382 The Cadmeia of Thebes seized in time of peace by the Spartans
380 *Isocrates' Panegyric*
379 Thebes liberated and the Spartans expelled from the Cadmeia
378 Second Athenian Confederacy formed
374 Jason of Pherae dominant in Thessaly.
373 Temple of Apollo at Delphi damaged by fire
371. Battle of Leuctra
370 March of Epaminondas through Laconia
Foundation of Megalopolis and Messenê
Jason of Pherae assassinated
368 Philip as a boy of fourteen taken to Thebes
367 *Aristotle comes to Athens*
364 Death of Pelopidas in Thessaly
Timotheus recovers Methonê, Pydna, Potidaea and Toronê for Athens

B.C. 362. Battle of Mantinea Death of Epaminondas
 359 Death in battle of Perdiccas III of Macedonia
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- 333 Alexander routs the Persians at Issus
- 332 Alexander besieges and captures Tyre and Gaza; occupies Egypt and founds Alexandria
- 332 Alexander crosses the Euphrates and wins the battle of Arbela
- 330 Unsuccessful rising of the Spartans
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- 330 Trial and acquittal of Ctesiphon
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- 326 Battle of Taxila and defeat of Porus.
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- 197 Defeat of the Macedonians by the Romans at Cynoscephalae
- 168 Battle of Pydna and end of Macedonian independence

NOTE ON BOOKS

The best way to make Socrates' acquaintance more intimately is to study Plato's dialogues and supplement with the *Memorabilia*. Or you may reverse the order, beginning with the *Memorabilia* and following that up by readings from Plato. The first book of the *Republic* is the best short study, or else the *Apology*, but the Socrates of the dialogues can only be assimilated gradually, and by a course of reading like that suggested in the text (p. 294), and this is, perhaps, rather a study of Plato. The single work which in briefest compass gives a comprehensive view of the Platonic system of thought is the *Republic*, but there is no dialogue which does not contribute something distinctive. Jowett's five volumes contain all the dialogues, including the *Laws*, and Jowett communicates as much of the charm of Plato as is possible in a translation. Notable translations of particular dialogues are Shelley's of the *Banquet*, Davies and Vaughan's of the *Republic*, and F. J. Church's of the *Euthyphron*, *Apology*, *Crito* and *Phaedo* in *The Trial and Death of Socrates* (Golden Treasury Series). Of books about Plato and Socrates mention may usefully be made of Grote's *Plato*, Pater's *Plato and Platonism*, Godley's *Socrates and Athenian Society in his Day*, and *The Life and Death of Socrates* recently published by Dent. Anyone willing to pursue a study of Plato more deeply will find the utmost help and inspiration in Professor J. A. Stewart's *The Myths of Plato*.

Aristotle's *Ethics* may be read in Peters' or Welldon's translation. Marshall's *Aristotle's Theory of Conduct* is an excellent exposition of the content. For the *Politics* there is a choice of Welldon's and Jowett's translations, Welldon's the freer and more readable. Of the *Poetics*, that brief treatise on the theory of poetry which no one should miss, there are translations by Butcher and Bywater, each in its way a classic. The *Rhetoric* has been translated by Jebb. Aristotle's writings on physical science are only for the adventurous, and the same may be said of his logical works and his *Metaphysics*. All are included in Bohn's Series. The two chief works on Natural History have been attractively translated, his *History of Animals* by D'Arcy Thompson (1910), his *Parts of Animals* by Dr. William Ogle (1882). The minor biological treatises have also found their translator in Dr. Ogle. But since the publication of *The Legacy of Greece* the essays of Dr. Singer and Professor D'Arcy Thompson in that volume have made an understanding of what the Greeks, including Aristotle, achieved in natural science easy and delightful. For Aristotle's *Psychology* the standard English work is Dr. Edwin Wallace's. For a brief survey of Aristotle's system as a whole Sir Alexander Grant's *Aristotle* in the series "Ancient Classics for English Readers" (Blackwood) will be found most helpful, or (with some knowledge of Greek) Wallace's *Outlines of the Philosophy of Aristotle*. A fuller and more complete exposition of the content of Aristotle's works, very recently published, is W. D. Ross's *Aristotle* (Methuen, 1923). The relations of Plato and Aristotle to earlier and later thinkers can be studied in any

standard history of Philosophy, Burnet's, or Schwegler's, or Ueberweg's Davidson's *Aristotle* in the "Great Educator" series is valuable, especially for Aristotle's views on education

For the further study of the great historians the following may be recommended

Bury (J. B.), *Lectures on the Greek Historians*

The Introduction to Macan's *Herodotus, Books IV, V and VI*

Jebb's essay on the Speeches of Thucydides in *Hellenica*

The chapter on Thucydides in J. A. K. Thomson's *The Greek Tradition*

Dakyns on Xenophon in *Hellenica*, and the introductions to his translations of the historical works

This, however, should supplement, not take the place of, attentive reading of the histories themselves. For English translations see Note on Books to Part III above, p. 270

The most recent work in English on the *Greek Orators* is Dobson's (Methuen, 1919), a useful study within convenient compass. For students prepared to go deeper there is Jebb's *Attic Orators*, in two volumes, published by Macmillan (1893), a work of high scholarship and literary charm. For readers interested in the historical issues two fascinating books are Hogarth's *Philip and Alexander of Macedon* (Murray, 1897) and Pickard-Cambridge's *Demosthenes* (Putnam, 1914). Demosthenes' public speeches are all translated by Pickard-Cambridge (Oxford University Press, 2 vols.), *Aeschines* will be found in the Loeb Classics, translated by C. D. Adams, of Isocrates' masterpieces there are full and admirable abstracts in Jebb's second volume, and all Isocrates is translated by J. H. Friese in Bohn.

Of the larger books on Greek tragedy the latest published in England is also the most inspiring. This is Professor Gilbert Norwood's *Greek Tragedy* (Methuen, 1920). Haigh's *Tragic Drama of the Greeks* (1896), together with his *Attic Theatre* (1889, both Clarendon Press), forms the most complete and thorough study in English. Roy C. Flickinger's *The Greek Theater and its Drama* (University Press, Chicago, 1918) presents the latest results of research with admirably sane judgment and literary skill. The illustrations and plans add greatly to the attractiveness of this book. Cornford's *Origin of Attic Comedy* (Arnold, 1914) is the most original and suggestive study extant of Athenian comedy. There are, however, two small handbooks, Sheppard's *Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge University Press, 1911) and Lionel Barnett's *Greek Drama* (Dent, 1900, 1901, 1903, and 1912), which, each with some individuality of treatment, give what is needed for the intelligent reading of Greek plays. For the Greek dramatists in English the following complete editions are recommended

Aeschylus, Morshead (Macmillan, 1901)

Sophocles, Lewis Campbell (Murray, 1896)

Euripides, A. S. Way (Loeb, and Macmillan, 3 vols., 1907)

Aristophanes, Rogers (Bell, 1866 to 1913)

Taking plays singly, there are no translations of Greek drama into English with quite the charm of Gilbert Murray's almost alone of translators Professor Murray transmutes the Greek into English poetry.¹

¹ This is to be qualified by what is said afterwards of R. C. Trevelyan's translation of certain plays of Aeschylus

Murray's translations comprise *eight* dramas of Euripides (*Alcestis*, *Bacchae*, *Electra*, *Hippolytus*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *Medea*, *Rhesus*, *Trojan Women*), the *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus and Sophocles *Oedipus King*.

There are several good translations of the *Orestea* besides Morshead's : into *verse* by R C Trevelyan (1922), Dr Warr (George Allen, 1900), Miss Swanwick (Bell, 1899), Lewis Campbell (Kegan Paul, 1890), and John Stuart Blackie (Parker, 1850), into *prose* by Walter Headlam (Bell, 1909) and Lewis Campbell (Methuen, 1893). Campbell, Headlam, Miss Swanwick, and Blackie translate the whole of Aeschylus. Of the *Prometheus* there is an excellent translation by Edwyn Bevan (David Nutt, 1902), and another by the fourth Earl of Carnarvon. Browning has translated the *Agamemnon*, and an impressive version by Dr Thring of Uppingham was published (posthumously) in 1904. Mr Platt's translation of the *Agamemnon* into Biblical prose (Grant Richards, 1911) is an interesting (though to me unconvincing) experiment. But of all translations of Aeschylus, prose or verse, Trevelyan's translations of the *Orestea*, in my judgment, come nearest to the force and grandeur of the original. They aim at reproducing "for those who cannot read Greek, not only the meaning, but the form, phrasing and movement of the original", and succeed in this more than antecedently would seem possible.

Other translations of *Sophocles* are Plumptre's (1867) and J S Phillimore's (2 vols, Allen, 1902), Sir George Young (1888, 1917, and in Dent's "Every Man Series") includes the fragments of lost plays. R C Trevelyan has translated the *Ajax* (Allen, 1919).

For translation of Aristophanes, see above, p 270. The recovered portions of *Four Plays of Menander* have been edited by Edward Capps and published (1910) by Ginn — they well repay study.

For a first study of ancient Greek architecture Bell's *Hellenic Architecture* (Bell, 1920) is all that can be desired. At the same time there are excellent sections on Hellenic architecture in each of several standard histories.

Fergusson (Sir James), *History of Architecture*, vol 1, 3rd edition, Murray, 1893

Simpson (F M), *History of Architectural Development*, vol 1, Longmans, 1905

Statham (H H), *Short Critical History of Architecture*, Batsford, 1912

Banister Fletcher, *History of Architecture on the Comparative Method*, 6th edition, Batsford, 1921

And there is Anderson and Spiers' *Architecture of Greece and Rome* (Batsford, 1902 and 1907).

For the architecture of the Parthenon, besides Gardner's *Ancient Athens* (Macmillan, 1902), there are accounts, also excellent, in Weller, *Athens and its Monuments* (Macmillan Company, 1913), and D'Ooge, *The Acropolis* (Macmillan, 1908). These more recent works give the results of the latest research, but do not displace the great classics of an earlier time, Penrose's *Principles of Athenian Architecture* and Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* (vol 1 1762, vol 11 1787, vol 111 1794, vol 1V 1816, Supplementary Volume, 1830). Whoever can obtain access to any of these will be well repaid.

The standard English text-book of Greek sculpture is Professor E A

Gardner's *Handbook* (Macmillan, latest edition, 1915) there is also an excellent *Introduction to Greek Sculpture* by L E Upcott (Clarendon Press, 1887) Murray's *History of Greek Sculpture*, in two volumes (Murray, 1890), is the standard history. The history of sculpture down to modern times is made an enchanting study in Short's *History of Sculpture* (Heinemann, 1907). Other books to be noted are Hill (G F), *One Hundred Masterpieces of Sculpture* (Methuen, 1909), Von Mach, *Greek Sculpture, Its Spirit and Principles* (Ginn, 1903), Guy Dickins, *Hellenistic Sculpture* (Clarendon Press, 1920¹). All these are helpful, but for quickening insight into, and unfaltering interpretation of, the very spirit of Greek sculpture there is nothing equal to the short monograph, *Greek Sculpture* by John Warrack, published by Schulze at Edinburgh in 1913.

How beautiful the plates reproducing Greek sculpture can be, may be seen to great advantage in Murray, *The Sculptures of the Parthenon*. Excellent illustrations of sculpture—in addition to those in the books already mentioned—are to be found in Von Mach's *Handbook of Greek and Roman Sculpture* (Boston, 1905). For monumental reliefs, that exquisite branch of Greek art so fully illustrated at Athens,² there is Percy Gardner's *Sculptured Tombs of Hellas* (Macmillan, 1896).

The most interesting books of Greek travel from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century are, perhaps, sufficiently indicated in Chapter XVIII. Of more modern books of travel the following may be recommended.

Mahaffy, *Rambles and Studies in Greece*, 5th edition, 1907
(Macmillan)

Mrs Bosanquet, *Days in Attica*, 1914 (Methuen)

A most useful and interesting book in this connection is Michaelis, *A Century of Archaeological Discovery*, translated by Miss Kahnweiler (Murray, 1908). Marshall (F H), *Discovery in Greek Lands* (Cambridge University Press, 1920), brings the story nearly down to the present time.

The publication of *The Legacy of Greece* in 1921 and of *The Pageant of Greece* in 1923 (both edited by Mr Livingstone and published by the Clarendon Press) has richly enlarged for English readers the means of appreciating, in all departments, the debt of European civilization to the Greeks. For completeness on the literary side a literary history is indispensable, for this in freshness, originality, and vivid interest, Professor Gilbert Murray's *History of Ancient Greek Literature*, published by Heinemann in 1897, holds its place.

Published posthumously Guy Dickins died of wounds in July, 1916

¹ I regret very much that no appropriate place for describing some of these has been found in Chapter XVII.

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n refers to footnotes, ^ over final 'e' indicates that the 'e' is separately sounded

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